Virginia Woolf and Walter Pater: a Reappraisal

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Michael John Russell Baxter

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Introduction

Meisel's 1980 monograph *The Absent Father: Virginia Woolf and Walter Pater* remains the most substantial work on the relation between the two authors to date. In it Meisel engages in a 'psychoanalysis' of Woolf's texts in order to reveal Pater's repressed influence (1980, xiii), and his primary method is to identify affinities between Pater and Woolf's critical writing. Because of this, Meisel has provided a fairly comprehensive analysis of Woolf's criticism, but only a superficial analysis of her novels, identifying various points of correspondence, but paying little attention to how these relate to the larger meaning of each text. This thesis will supplement Meisel's observations by examining texts from each major phase in Woolf's career: her early critical engagement with Pater in *The Voyage Out*, her mature appreciation of him in *To the Lighthouse* and *Orlando*, and her late ambivalence towards him in the last decade of her life. In my first chapter I will consider Pater's influence on Woolf's first novel, *The Voyage Out*, as a measure of her early interest in and initial artistic response to his writings; I suggest that Woolf, like Pater in *Marius the Epicurean*, was drawing upon various philosophical and literary precursors (including Pater), in order to synthesise and express her own distinctive world-view, in a form of heavily fictionalised autobiography.

Meisel identifies 'two moments in Woolf's later criticism in which Pater is actually singled out for praise' (1980, 81), in reviews that Woolf wrote in 1920 and 1922, of English prose anthologies. In these essays Woolf's praise for Pater is strong; in the first she describes him as 'the writer who from words made blue and gold and green; marble, brick, the wax petal of flowers; warmth too and scent; all things that the hand delighted to touch and the nostrils to smell, while the mind traced subtle winding paths and surprised recondite secrets' (1988, 172-3), and in the second she identifies him as the writer who best achieves the essayist's task of removing from his writing the 'impurities of literature […] the essay must be pure […] pure from dullness, deadness, and deposits of extraneous matter' (1994, 217-8). Whilst acknowledging that Woolf's comments are positive, Meisel states that these 'two moments' provide 'the only generous - and genuine - insights into his work to be found anywhere in her writing, exceptions that may prove the rule of repression' (1980, 81). This is one point at which we might question Meisel's analysis, because these two moments were in fact to become three, when she included her 1922 review on 'The Modern Essay' in her first

collected work of criticism, *The Common Reader* (1925). Her decision to include this essay (which would otherwise have become, for the duration of Woolf's lifetime at least, an ephemeral piece of journalism) in her first collected work of criticism demonstrates an increasing commitment to Pater's skill, and an increased willingness to acknowledge his influence.

It should also be noted that Woolf published, and republished, these essays during her peak years of literary experimentalism and success: in 1920 she was breaking away from the literary conventions that she had observed during the composition of *The Voyage Out* (1915) and *Night and Day* (1919), and the later review was first published in the same year as Woolf's first experimental novel, *Jacob's Room* (1922). Woolf published *The Common Reader* in 1925, between *Mrs Dalloway* (1924) and *To the Lighthouse* (1927), two of her best known and most highly accomplished works. Three years after *The Common Reader*, Woolf was to publicly praise Pater in *Orlando* (1928), explicitly recognising his influence on her writing, and thus continuing the trend of increasingly positive comments about him that she published over the course of the 1920s.

In my second chapter I argue that Woolf's concept of 'androgyny', as described in *A Room of One's Own*, and as explored in *To the Lighthouse*, may owe much to Pater's concepts of 'mind' and 'soul' in his essay on 'Style'. I will argue that in the cultural schematic that Woolf constructs in *To the Lighthouse*, the figures of William Bankes and Augustus Carmichael are, respectively, of great social and aesthetic import. Further examining Mr Carmichael's character, I will draw out various, potentially paterian features. In the first part of my third chapter I will analyse *Orlando* as 'the consummate paterian portrait' (Meisel 1980, 45), comparing the protagonist to Pater's description of the Mona Lisa in *The Renaissance*, and arguing that Woolf celebrates a character who, like Pater's, encompasses a wide range of historical and cultural influences.

In the 1930s, Woolf's regard for Pater appears to become conflicted: she makes positive references to Pater in her biography of *Roger Fry*, but in *The Pargiters*, the prototypical text that would become *The Years* and *Three Guineas*, Woolf lays a heavy emphasis on Pater's misogyny (1978, 126). I will argue that Woolf's last novel, *Between the Acts*, presents an artistic overview of history that is comparable with *Orlando*, but is also deeply pessimistic and may represent a loss of faith in Pater's thinking. As the body of this dissertation deals

with key moments in the development of Woolf's literary relationship with Pater, I will leave discussion of these last, late references to Pater until my final chapter and conclusion, which will put forward some speculations concerning the changing nature of her relation to the earlier writer.

1. *Marius the Epicurean* and *The Voyage Out*: Woolf's Evaluation of Paterian Aestheticism

This chapter will discuss how the social and aesthetic schemes that Woolf's sets out in her first novel *The Voyage Out*, conform to and challenge those that Pater set out in *The Renaissance*, and in *Marius the Epicurean*. Although Novak has observed how 'even [Woolf's] cautious and undeveloped definition of the relation between ethics and aesthetics is reminiscent of *Marius the Epicurean*' (1975, 44), no critic has explored this correspondence in specific relation to *The Voyage Out.* In this chapter I will be expanding on Novak's argument that Woolf's 'intent was to trace the artist's search, to produce an analysis of the effect more tough-minded and practical, less intuitive and narcissistic that that of Pater' (1975, 44).

Central to Pater's critical project in *The Renaissance* was a thoroughgoing doctrine of 'Art for Art's sake', or rather, 'ecstasy for ecstasy's sake' (1998, 152), a doctrine that I will term 'Pure Aestheticism'. Pater rejected this Pure Aestheticism in later life, and went on to explore this process of theoretical revision and development in his fictionalised autobiography *Marius the Epicurean*. As such, the narrator's persona in *The Renaissance* formed the basis of the young Marius' character, and *Marius the Epicurean* describes how Marius departs from this purely hedonistic aestheticism, becomes increasingly socially aware, and eventually embraces Christianity as an ideal synthesis of social and aesthetic values. The form of aestheticism that Marius moves towards is one that I will term 'Social Aestheticism'.

Although *The Renaissance* is probably Pater's most famous text, Buckler has noted that 'there has been general agreement among several generations of critics that *Marius the Epicurean* is the central text in the Pater canon, the work in which Pater's peculiar sense of literary means and ends is most fully and admirably realized' (1987, 243). *Marius* is also a text that Woolf declared having a 'passion' for during her adolescence (Schulkind 2002, 44), and she appears to have read *The Renaissance* at this time too (Woolf 1990, 274). This chapter will present three main arguments concerning Woolf's response to these texts in *The Voyage Out*. I will begin by suggesting that the mode of aesthetic appreciation that Pater presents in *The Renaissance* is one that Woolf largely appropriates in her own aesthetic theory, but that she also problematises the idea of the continuous and sustained 'ecstasy' of Pater's Pure

Aestheticism, by highlighting certain cultural constraints and ethical consequences that Pater overlooks.

After exploring the ways in which Woolf critiques Pure Aestheticism, through Rachel, and Rachel's engagement with music, I will look at how Rachel's development provides an alternative version of Social Aestheticism, which rejects a paterian endorsement of Christianity as an ideal synthesis of social and aesthetic values. It will be noted how, in her critique of Christianity, Woolf draws on Pater's own reasoning elsewhere in *Marius*.

In the third section I will suggest that Woolf advances a modified form of Moorean ethics (referred to by Conradi as 'the cult of personal relations' (1981, 427)), as a substitute for Pater's aestheticised Christianity. However, just as Woolf problematises Pater's ethics, I will also suggest some ways in which she problematises Moore's, by demonstrating various kinds of conflicts that are inherent in human psychology and in human interactions: conflicts of a kind that Pater acknowledges but Moore does not. In this way Woolf draws upon both Pater and Moore's ideas, playing them off against each other, and retaining the strongest ideas of both as a vehicle for her own particular brand of feminism: Whitworth has noted how 'the mobile paterian consciousness […] enable[s] Woolf's texts continually to interrogate the assumptions of her readers and those of modernism' (2000, 162).

There are numerous superficial similarities between Marius' character and the character of Rachel (the main protagonist of *The Voyage Out*); each has lost the parent who would traditionally provide a role model, both are relatively free from financial or familial ties, each seeks meaning and fulfilment through the pursuit of aesthetic pleasure, and both suffer an untimely death from an unidentified fever. Whitworth has noted how 'Pater saw reality as being in a constant state of flux. Its apparent solidity was merely an illusion created by language' (2000, 152), and Marius and Rachel both express an epistemic scepticism that is derived from an awareness of flux (Pater 1885a, 230; Woolf 1915, 132).

When Woolf was revising *The Voyage Out* for the American edition, during 'the winter of 1919-1920' (DeSalvo 1980, 110), she edited out most of Rachel's personal history from chapter XVI (114). Whilst this meant that Woolf removed various autobiographical parallels (113), it also led to the removal of several of these parallels between her and Pater's characters. The only other two alterations that were made to the text during this revision

(119) were to show how disempowered Rachel is at the beginning of the novel, and in particular, how she has been denied the aesthetic ideal of *The Renaissance*. The first of these, in chapter II, is an alteration to a description of the ship *Euphrosyne*, which DeSalvo identifies as a metaphor for Rachel (1980, 119). In the 1915 edition we are told that 'in her vigour and purity she might be likened to all beautiful things, for as a ship she had a life of her own' (Woolf 1915, 25). In the American edition the ship 'might be likened to all beautiful things, worshipped and felt as a symbol' (DeSalvo 1980, 119). The 1915 description anticipates Rachel's revelation in chapter VI of the possibility of personal and intellectual independence (Woolf 1915, 75), but in the 1920 edition the ship becomes an object of aesthetic appreciation; Rachel's beauty is no longer empowering, and instead she becomes a passive recipient of (presumably masculine) praise.

Following a revelation concerning the relationship between men and women, the second revision that Woolf made was to the end of the following paragraph:

> By this new light she saw her life for the first time a creeping hedged-in thing, driven cautiously between high walls, here turned aside, there plunged in darkness, made dull and crippled for ever - her life that was the only chance she had - a thousand words and actions became plain to her (72).

In the 1920 American edition, the last phrase of this paragraph is replaced with: 'the only chance she had - the short season between two silences' (DeSalvo 1980, 92), and in both editions this is followed with an exclamation in which Rachel declares a hatred for men.

This substitution echoes Pater's description of Coleridge's poetic development, as a 'sudden blossoming, through one short season' (1920, 87), but the revision also changes the tone of the whole paragraph. In the 1920 version the paragraph reiterates, and recasts from a female perspective, the sentiment of a famous sentence from Pater's 'Conclusion' to *The Renaissance*, in which he describes the wasted experience of those who do not pursue the ideal of Pure Aestheticism; Pater claims that 'not to discriminate every moment some passionate attitude in those about us, and in the very brilliancy of their gifts some tragic dividing of forces on their ways is, on this short day of frost and sun, to sleep before evening' (1998, 152).

Whilst in tone and in the specifics of syntax, the two passages appear to be very different, Woolf and Pater's sentences both express a sense of wasted time and experience through the imagery of life as a journey (the 'voyage' being Woolf's central metaphor in this novel). Each also ends with a reference to the tragic brevity of life, and each represents the squandering of lived experience as an impending threat of 'darkness': a deprivation of sensory stimuli. The major difference between them is that Rachel has not been allowed to choose her experiences as Pater has; where the choice to 'discriminate every moment' is taken for granted by Pater, Rachel's lack of agency is emphasised by the image of her life as 'a creeping hedged-in thing, driven cautiously between high walls'. Similarly, where Pater warns against the risk of 'sleeping before evening', Rachel is involuntarily 'plunged into darkness'; where Pater observes 'the parting of forces on their ways', Rachel is blindly 'turned aside', unaware of even the existence of a choice. Each ends with a reference to the tragic brevity of life, but in place of Pater's 'short day of frost and sun', Woolf chooses 'the short season between two silences', drawing upon another of Pater's metaphors for vanishing potential, this provides a more accurate description of Rachel's summer of self-discovery, and is also expressive of her interest in music.

Although Woolf's rewriting of Pater's sentiment may have had a feminist edge, it retains the aesthetic spirit of Pater's original, and shows Woolf's protagonist to have a basically paterian outlook; as a reflection on Rachel's character, it is significant that instead of resenting the fact that knowledge has been withheld from her because she is a woman, she resents the fact that, during her brief life, those around her have knowingly restricted her opportunities for lived experience; that she has been denied Pater's ideal (later, under Helen's more liberal guardianship, Rachel is escorted through the streets of a town, and there witnesses the romantic relations that she has previously been denied; they refer to these walks as 'seeing life' (1915, 88)). The effect of this substitution is to transform the expansive, social revelation of the 1915 text ('a thousand words and actions became plain to her' (72)) into the inward-looking, personal revelation of 1920 ('the short season between two silences' (DeSalvo 1980, 92)). Revising her response in this way reinforces Rachel's initial introversion, and her conformity to the Pure Aesthetic ideal of Pater's *Renaissance*, but it also complicates Pater's vision, exposing the privileged position that Pater's speaker occupies, and Roe has noted how, ultimately, it is 'impossible for a good Victorian daughter to shed the profound, educated ignorance which was designed to prevent self-knowledge. Eventually Rachel becomes broken, deformed, by the endeavour' (2000, 167). Other critics have also commented on

Rachel's eventual death, and on how it linked to her increased range of experience; Hussey, with an almost aestheticist emphasis on introspection (Pater 1998, xxix-xxx), notes how Rachel 'becomes increasingly involved with her body as an object of thought [and] the problems encountered by Rachel arise predominantly from her being forced to live her body in a way that she is totally unprepared for' (Hussey 1986, 4-5).

Although Woolf evidently found that she could not wholly subscribe to Pater's Pure Aestheticism, there are important similarities between each of their ideas about the nature of art and aesthetic appreciation. Music played an important role in the development of Woolf's ideas about art (Jacobs 1993, 227-260), and by making the two central characters of her novel a musician and a writer Woolf is able, through their discussions, to articulate some of her ideas about each form. Many of these ideas seem to have been influenced by Pater's writing, although they are expressed by Rachel in simplified, and perhaps more pragmatic forms. When Rachel thinks about music, for example, she draws on spatial and architectural metaphors that appear in Pater's influential 'Style' essay (1920, 23). In this essay Pater also defends the view of music as 'the ideal of all art whatever, precisely because in music it is impossible to distinguish the form from the substance or matter, the subject from the expression' (37), and Rachel articulates a similar, if simplified view when discussing art with Hewet, asking "Why do you write novels? You ought to write music. Music, you see […] goes straight for things. It says all there is to say at once" (Woolf 1915, 195-6).

For Rachel, as for Pater, music's value as an art form lies in its ability to communicate experience directly and truthfully, in a non-verbal form: 'nobody ever said a thing they meant, or ever talked of a feeling they felt, but that was what music was for' (29). Although music's ability to convey pure, non-verbal experience appeals to Rachel, because it communicates nothing specific, she learns nothing from it, and is thus disempowered by her lack of knowledge: 'absorbed by her music she accepted her lot very complacently, blazing into indignation perhaps once a fortnight, and subsiding as she subsided now' (29). The feminist connotations of this statement are clear, and the implicit suggestion that a pure aestheticism may be socially disabling hints at a critical divergence from Pater. Here, as elsewhere in the novel, Woolf also draws on the metaphor of fire, and this metaphor, of the consumer of art as a flame, features heavily in both writers' works. Probably the most famous passage in all of Pater's works is from 'The Conclusion' to *The Renaissance* when, describing the aestheticist ideal, he claims that 'to burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is

success in life' (1998, 152). The way to achieve this, Pater thinks, is to consume art, and to adopt an attitude of artistic appreciation towards life itself, in order to 'be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy' (152).

Hewet, an aspiring novelist like Woolf, is the main artist figure in the book, and when he describes his conception of individuals who share a single reality, he draws on idealist metaphors for enclosed, private worlds, and on the metaphor of the individual's sphere of experience as a flame: 'all we see of each other is a speck, like the wick in the middle of that flame. The flame goes about with us everywhere; it's not ourselves exactly, but what we feel; the world in short, or people mainly; all kinds of people' (Woolf 1915, 98). Hewet also suggests that he wants to make art by arranging the material of his experience into ordered patterns, and Meisel has analysed the paterian connotations of 'pattern' more generally within the novel (1980, 183-4).

The narrator also uses metaphors which seem to be derived from Pater, adopting, for example, his metaphor of the stone and the flame to describe how 'the food served as an extinguisher upon any faint flame of the human spirit that might survive the midday heat, […] Towards four o'clock the human spirit again began to lick the body, as a flame licks a black promontory of coal' (Woolf 1915, 107). Louise Desalvo has explored many of the ways in which the development of the novel and its characters may correspond to developments in Woolf's own life, including her marriage, and when redrafting the novel Woolf wrote about the difficulty of masking autobiography in fiction (1980). Woolf's awareness of this may be reflected in Hewet's experience of writing his novel: 'shaping the world as it appeared to him now that he and Rachel were going to be married. It was different certainly. The book called *Silence* would not now be the same book that it would have been' (Woolf 1915, 274/5). Suzanne Raitt has also noted how, echoing Hewet, 'shortly after the publication of [*Night and Day*] Woolf wrote of her interest in "the things one doesn't say; what effect does that have?"' (Raitt 2000, 31).

If the ideas about art and literature that Hewet expresses are intended to reflect Woolf's own, it is significant that Hewet, describing the artistic process, wonders 'whether there's anything else in the whole world worth doing' (Woolf 1915, 204). Hewet's attitude is like Pater's in *The Renaissance*, where Pater argues that 'the function of the aesthetic critic is to distinguish, to analyse, and separate from its adjuncts, the virtue by which a picture, a landscape, a fair

personality in life or in a book, produces this special impression of beauty or pleasure, to indicate what the source of that impression is, and under what conditions it is experienced' (1998, xxx). Hewet's interests are, however, broader than Pater's; although the mode and conditions of conception are emphasised, unlike the purely inward-looking Pater, Hewet is interested in 'the novel itself, the whole conception, the way one's seen the thing, felt about it, made it stand in relation to other things' (Woolf 1915, 204). Although music is the purer medium, literature allows Hewet and Woolf to engage with a reality outside of the artwork, and to capture a broader range of human experiences. Like Hewet's, Woolf's novel was not solely concerned with creating a heightened state of consciousness, but also with (among other things) the accurate depiction of a variety of states of consciousness; she wanted to give 'the feeling of the vast tumult of life, as variously and disorderly as possible' (1976, 82), which included processes of development and change. As such, although the conception of art that we find in the novel is one that owes much to Pater's vision in *The Renaissance*, Woolf challenges Pater's ideal by highlighting 'the solipsism which was an inherent danger of paterian aesthetics' (Whitworth 2000, 160): Rachel initially feels that 'to feel anything strongly was to create an abyss between oneself and others who feel strongly perhaps but differently. It was far better to play the piano and forget all the rest' (Woolf 1915, 29), and she spends much of the novel growing out of this solipsistic attitude. Because of this, Pater's *Marius the Epicurean* provides a closer model for Woolf's novel than *The Renaissance*, because it provides a narrative of development, and addresses larger questions about the place of art and the individual in society.

Rachel's development over the course of the novel is one of delayed socialisation, and just as Marius revises his world-view, shifting from a narrowly individualist, aesthetic ideal, to a broader, socially orientated ideal, so too does Rachel. We are told early on that if Rachel's 'one definite gift' for music 'was surrounded by dreams and ideas of the most extravagant and foolish description, no one was any the wiser' (26). In *Melymbrosia* the 'dreams and ideas' that Rachel holds are disclosed to the reader, and her belief in an aesthetic idealism is made very clear; she feels that 'music was real; books were real; all things that one saw were real; and all that one thought' (1982c, 23). This fairly extreme and unusual form of idealism recalls Pater's description of 'the ideality of the highest sort of dramatic poetry', which is able to fix 'some brief and wholly concrete moment' (1998, 95) in a world that otherwise exists in a state of perpetual flux (150-2): a philosophy that Rachel intuitively believes (1915, 132), and which corresponds to Marius' ideas in the early stages of his development (1885a, 230).

Through art, and her conversations about art (with the less solipsistic Hewet), Rachel overcomes her initial introversion, which feeds and is fed by her lack of education and her inability to negotiate social interactions ('all the energies that might have gone into languages, science, or literature, that might have made her friends, or shown her the world, poured straight into music' (Woolf 1915, 26)). Despite being better educated, more experienced, and more socially active and aware, Hewet, like Rachel, is profoundly lonely until they meet, living a paterian existence of refined but unfulfilling aesthetic indulgence. When he and Rachel fall in love they achieve Marius' imagined, but unrealised ideal of a romantic relationship, and through their love Hewet and Rachel pass beyond the range of Marius' experience.

In the absence of any romantic attachment, Marius finds friendship and religion to provide the most meaningful forms of social interaction; Christian worship is understood in both *Marius* and *The Voyage Out* as an attempt to bridge the divide between the aesthetic and social realms, and following Rachel and Hewet's longest discussion of art (Woolf 1915, 194-207) the characters attend a church service. In *Marius*, Christianity is regarded as being the highest cultural achievement of the Western world, and the culmination of Marius's social development is his participation in a Christian community. Although less enthusiastic and again, less detailed, Rachel's view of Christianity in *Melymbrosia* is similarly sympathetic; although, like Marius, she seems to lack any sense of the existence of an actual deity, she values Christianity because she enjoys 'the sense of community which worship brings', and the idea that it contributes to a continuous cultural tradition (1982c, 174). In the published novel this defence was removed, and Rachel's perception of the service is overwhelmingly negative, because it fails both aesthetically, and as an occasion of social significance. For Marius 'the whole office, indeed, with its interchange of lections, hymns and silences, was itself like a single piece of highly composite, dramatic music; a "song of degrees," rising to a climax' (1885b, 136), but Rachel finds no such sense of harmony, being highly aware throughout of the incongruity of the service's material (Woolf 1915, 214-5): unlike Marius, she feels the same 'discomfort she felt when forced to sit through an unsatisfactory piece of music badly played' (215); she is 'tantalised, enraged by the clumsy insensitiveness of the conductor, who put the stress on the wrong places, and annoyed by the vast flock of the audience tamely praising and acquiescing without knowing or caring' (215).

The service also fails socially: instead of uniting the congregation in their conformity to the guidance of Christ, the worshippers in *The Voyage Out* remain distinct: 'they made another effort to fit his interpretation of life upon the lives they lived, but as they were all very different, […] they did very different things with the words of Christ' (215). Whilst Marius harbours deep admiration for the presiding priest (136-7), Rachel sees Mr Bax merely as 'a man of much kindliness and simplicity, though by no means clever' (216). When Marius attends a service, he observes a worshipper 'giving up, one by one, for the greatest of ends, the greatest gifts; parting with himself, and, above all, with the serenity, the deep and divine serenity, of his own mind; yet, from the midst of his distress, crying out upon the greatness of his success, as if foreseeing this very worship' (140). Unlike this worshipper, who painfully renounces his sense of self in the service of a higher ideal, Rachel sees the congregation's worship as an act of self-indulgence: 'she was adoring something shallow and smug, clinging to it, so the obstinate mouth witnessed, with the assiduity of a limpet; nothing would tear her from her demure belief in her own virtue and the virtues of her religion' (216). Because religion is merely an exercise in self-congratulation, it also deadens the worshipper 'to the rush of fresh and beautiful things past her' (216); a state of being that is the exact opposite of Pater's aesthetic ideal. Rachel criticises the service precisely because it fails to fulfil those social and aesthetic claims that Marius makes for it; Rachel's view of Christianity is the opposite of Pater's, but she bases her critique on Marius and Pater's criteria of value.

After the shock of religious disillusionment, Rachel rejects the guidance of Christianity, and seeks illumination from those around her: 'it seemed possible that each new person might remove the mystery which burdened her' (239). The first two characters that Rachel turns to are Evelyn Murgatroyd and Miss Allen, an ardent young feminist and a middle-aged literary critic. Both women occupy marginal roles in society, and support feminist causes: Evelyn advocates a revolutionary response to social problems, rejecting abstract theorising, of the kind that Hirst engages in (236), whereas Miss Allen's outlook is more mature, tempered by a greater breadth of experience, and a greater awareness of human behaviour, which may originate in her knowledge of literature. Thus Rachel is immediately exposed to the views of her peers who are actively engaged in current social and aesthetic affairs (in contrast to Mr Bax's weak attempt to instil a generalised amiability in his congregation).

This also allows Woolf, in a manner much like Pater in *Marius*, to contrast the radicalism of youth with the moderation of maturity; when Rachel considers the difficulty of self-

expression, Miss Allen observes that a person's beliefs and attitudes depend largely upon age and temperament (242): '"People say youth is pleasant; I myself find middle age far pleasanter," […] "when one was young," she continued, "things could seem so very serious if one was made that way"' (242). Evelyn lacks this moderating experience, and these characters could be seen to exemplify the view that Pater expressed in *Marius*, where he observes how more radical philosophies 'will always be more or less the special philosophy, or prophecy, of the young, when the ideal of a rich experience comes to them in the ripeness of their receptive, if not of the reflective, powers' (Pater 1885b, 23). The connection between the two novels might also be implied by Miss Allen's identification of *Euphues* as "The germ of the English novel" (Woolf 1915, 240). The title of this novel, from 1578, is the origin of the term 'euphuism', which Pater uses to describe the aesthetically refined prose style which is central to Marius' early aestheticist philosophy (Pater 1885a, 94), but which he later develops away from.

Although several characters exert some influence upon Rachel, chief among these is Helen Ambrose, who introduces Rachel to people that she can discuss life with frankly, and provides her with an alternative set of values to those offered by Christianity. Helen's role and characterisation also provide important parallels between Woolf's novel and *Marius the Epicurean*, in which the stoic emperor Marcus Aurelius acts as Marius' primary mentor. Helen is described as 'stoic' on the first page of the novel (Woolf 1915, 3), and later, when imagining the tragedies that might befall her family, her 'face tak[es] on the stoical expression of anticipated sorrow' (209). One of the greatest revelations that Aurelius imparts to Marius is that 'tis in thy power […] to think as thou wilt' (Pater 1885b, 55). A crucial turning point in Rachel's development, and in Helen's influence over her, is when Helen shows Rachel that she can '"be a person on your own account," […] "I can by m-m-myself," [Rachel] stammered, "in spite of you, in spite of the Dalloways, and Mr. Pepper, and Father, and my Aunts, in spite of these?" […] "In spite of them all," said Helen gravely' (Woolf 1915, 75). Taking up the promise of independence and free thought, Rachel and Marius then question their mentors on the same terms. Marius finds Aurelius to be too 'melancholy' and resigned to the world, which in Marius' view 'amounted to a tolerance of evil' (Pater 1885b, 57). Although 'sometimes [Rachel] would agree with the gloomiest thing that was said, at other times she refused to listen', countering Helen's theories 'with laughter, chatter, ridicule of the wildest, and fierce bursts of anger even at what she called the "croaking of a raven in the mud"' (Woolf 1915, 209).

In November 1910 Woolf wrote that she was 'seething with fragments of love, morals, ethics, comedy tragedy, and so on; and every morning pour them out into a manuscript' (1975, 440). The moral and ethical concerns in the novel are fairly clear, and the alternative to Christianity that the characters of Helen, Hewet and Hirst provide is one that appears to be derived largely from G. E. Moore's *Principia Ethica*, which Helen reads during the voyage to South America (Woolf 1915, 65). The ethical position that Moore advocates in this text had a very great effect on Woolf's immediate circle and, as Rosenbaum notes, on *The Voyage Out* (1971, 325).

For Moore the term 'good' does not refer to individual aspects of experience (such as 'pleasure', 'beauty', etc.), because these are only good insofar as they contribute to a state of mind that, as a whole, can be regarded as 'good'. In other words, because we do not experience individual aspects of consciousness in isolation, value can only be attributed to whole states of consciousness. To attribute goodness to any single aspect of consciousness is what Moore defines as the 'naturalistic fallacy'. The two states of consciousness that Moore regards as 'unmixed goods' are 'aesthetic enjoyments and personal relations' (1922, xxv). What Moore means by this is that these states of consciousness are the only things that are good for their own sake and come at no cost to others. By attributing value to these kinds of states of mind Moore follows Pater, who argues 'that the end of life is not action but contemplation--being as distinct from doing--a certain disposition of the mind is, in some shape or other, the principle of all the higher morality' (1920, 62).

Although Moore devotes an entire chapter to a repudiation of Hedonism (the doctrine that 'pleasure is the sole good' (1922, 39)), what he advocates in its place is arguably just a more complex, psychologically sophisticated version of the hedonistic attitude, based on subtly different metaphysical premises. Moore aimed his arguments at Mill and Sidgwick, whom he took to represent 'the whole field of Hedonistic doctrine' (1922, 64), but when Richard Dalloway quotes from Helen's copy of *Principia Ethica*, he reads a passage that suggests an agreement between Moore and Sidgwick's ethics: "'Good, then, is indefinable,'" he read out. "How jolly to think that's going on still! 'So far as I know there is only one ethical writer, Professor Henry Sidgwick, who has clearly recognised and stated this fact'"' (Woolf 1915, 65). Sidgwick, along with Mill, 'the Cyrenaic school[,] Epicurus and the Epicureans', were among those whom Moore identified as 'Hedonists' (1922, 63). This is the only point in *Principia Ethica* that Moore refers to these classical philosophers, whose thinking forms the

basis of Marius' Social Aestheticism (or 'New Cyrenaicism' (Pater 1885a, 145)), a doctrine that attaches great importance to aesthetic experience, but is tempered by the restraint, and social responsibility of Epicurus' ethical philosophy (from which later 'Epicureans' radically diverged). If Woolf was as enthusiastic about *Marius the Epicurean* as she later claimed (Schulkind 2002, 44), Moore's allusion to these classical philosophers is unlikely to have passed unnoticed. It also seems probable that she would have noticed the similarity between the practical consequences of Marius' and Moore's ideals. If, in her choice of quotation, Woolf wanted to align Moore's view with Sidgwick's, this would (on Moore's definition) place Moore in the same category as 'the Cyrenaic school[,] Epicurus and the Epicureans' (1922, 63) and, therefore, the same category as Marius. Although Moore's doctrine of the 'naturalistic fallacy' was seen to be radically new, the ideal lifestyle that follows from his ethical standpoint is, in practice, one of moderate hedonism very like that advocated in *Marius*. Eliding philosophical differences in this way is problematic from a strictly theoretical point of view, but if one were, like Evelyn Murgatroyd, 'to think of the human beings first and let the abstract ideas take care of themselves' (Woolf 1915, 236), there would be little cause for controversy.

Whilst Helen's stoicism also aligns her with earlier influences, Hirst's participation in cutting edge philosophy at Cambridge places him in an intellectual group much like that which Moore and Woolf's friends belonged to. Although Hirst is an important figure in *The Voyage Out*, Rachel does not admire him so much as she admires Hewet or Helen, and his influence is relatively minor. Given his generally antisocial outlook, it is perhaps surprising that Hirst claims that '"the whole meaning of life [is] Love," he said. "It seems to me to explain everything"' (294/5). This is an odd case, and depending on how one defines 'love', it could be regarded as exemplifying Moore's ethics (if Hirst intends that 'love' refer to a holistically good state of consciousness), or as a textbook example of a hedonistic attitude that falls foul of the naturalistic fallacy (if 'love' is defined as a single aspect of consciousness, which possesses supreme ethical or moral value). The ambiguity of Hirst's declaration may have been deliberate, as Rachel and Hewet's courtship shows 'love' to be a very problematic term, referring to an extremely complex, long-term emotional experience, which is not adequately represented by a single word.

The problem with the concept of 'love', presented by Hirst in such a bald form and, potentially, with the kinds of ethical ideas that Moore presents, are instantiated in the

character's experiences and their reflections on them. In trying to capture 'the feeling of the vast tumult of life, as variously and disorderly as possible' (1976, 82), Woolf implicitly demonstrates the shortcomings of those ethical and moral positions that provide ideals to aspire to, but no practical suggestion of how this may be achieved (Zwerdling observes how Moore rejected Victorian 'ethos of duty', because life's overwhelming complexity ensures that any 'ethical choice is so complicated that it becomes virtually impossible to make' (Zwerdling 1986, 153/4)). Evelyn and Mrs Flushing's experiences of love, for example, illustrate how personal psychology and circumstance may affect one's outlook and sense of value: Mrs Flushing denies the existence of love altogether (Woolf 1915, 259-60), and Evelyn trivialises it: 'love was all very well, and those snug domestic houses, […] but the real things were surely the things that happened, the causes, the wars, the ideals, which happened in the great world outside' (303). Whilst Rachel and Hewet's outlook is perhaps more sympathetic to Hirst's, they too have difficulty with the concept. Each reflects upon their experience and, due to its changeability, finds conventional notions about love, and depictions of it in existing literature, to be wanting; Rachel reflects that 'none of the books she read, […] suggested from their analysis of love that what their heroines felt was what she was feeling now. It seemed to her that her sensations had no name' (211). This is a situation that Woolf wanted to remedy, by focussing on the particularities of individuals' experiences, instead of generalising from her own, as Pater and Moore did.

In her articulation of this critique of paterian and Moorean values, Woolf seems to have drawn 'fragments of love, morals [and] ethics' (1976, 440) from various contemporaries, who were also engaging with these thinkers' ideals (for a sample of some of those scholars who have investigated 'Pater's relation to major [early] twentieth-century writers and critics' see McGrath (1986, 283-288)). Various critics have commented on Conrad's influence on *The Voyage Out*, and another important influence seems to have been Forster, who was deeply influenced by Moore, and whose doctrine of 'only connect' seems to have been derived from Moore's ethics, although he, like Evelyn Murgatroyd, had little patience for philosophical theorising (Furbank 1982, 44-5). *The Voyage Out* seems to endorse this position, and is populated by pairs of characters whose differences are mutually beneficial, and who learn from each others' company: Helen and Rachel, Helen and Hirst, Hirst and Hewet, and Rachel and Hewet: 'it was a time of profound thought and sudden revelations for more than one couple, and several single people' (1915, 212).

2. 'Style' and 'Androgyny' in *A Room of One's Own* and *To the Lighthouse*

In *The Voyage Out*, Pater appears to provide one of the major figures with whom Woolf engages, and a point of departure for Woolf's own ethical and aesthetic ideas. In this chapter I will explore a similar relation in Woolf's middle period, during which some of her best known works were produced. I will begin by looking at the models of literary style that Woolf and Pater advance in their major essays, and at how Pater's concept of style, as consisting of 'mind and soul', might fruitfully be compared to Woolf's notion of 'androgyny', in *A Room of One's Own*.

I will then consider Woolf's 1927 novel, *To the Lighthouse* as an exercise in androgynous composition. In accordance with accepted critical wisdom, I will suggest that Lily Briscoe presents an idealised Woolfian androgyne, and that the painting that she creates is an androgynous composition in which she reconciles the gender extremes that are presented by Mr and Mrs Ramsay. However, I will also suggest that William Bankes (a scientist) and Augustus Carmichael (a poet) supply an essential mediating influence between Lily and the Ramsays. I will argue that, in contrast to the Ramsays, Bankes and Carmichael are presented as 'impersonal'. They support Lily's creative endeavour both directly and indirectly, by providing platonic male-female relations and by pursuing creative, gender-neutral occupations. Of these two figures, I will focus on Carmichael, arguing that certain elements of his character may have been intended as a tribute to Pater's literary persona. Whilst Bankes provides a stable, enduring and supportive friendship, Carmichael's relation to Lily is more distant, but in the moment and act of artistic creation, perhaps more influential.

As Farwell discusses, critics have associated Woolf's concept of 'androgyny' with a number of apparently oppositional pairings, such as those 'of intuition and reason, subjectivity and objectivity, anima and animus, heterosexuality and homo-sexuality, and finally manic and depressive' (1975, 434). Rather than questioning such pairings, or suggesting some other, Farwell considers the metaphorical mechanism that underlies the concept, and identifies two traditional conceptions of androgyny: androgyny as a balance of opposites, and androgyny as a fusion of opposites (433-4). Farwell argues that in Woolf's work the dominant form is an androgynous fusion (434). One of the problems with Farwell's argument is that she does not

identify the level at which this fusion is to take place; whether androgyny should be a neurological attribute, or merely a habit of thought, and Rado helpfully points out that the concept of androgyny in early twentieth-century science was one that was generally based on the idea of a biologically distinct 'third sex', composed of '"masculine" women and "feminine" men' (1997, 149). Biological metaphors are crucial in Woolf's description of the androgynous mind, and whilst Woolf maintains a distinction between the genders throughout, rather than embrace a tripartite division (in which the androgyne occupies a distinct category at the centre of the conventional male/female dichotomy), her conception seems to embrace a concept of gender based on an essential, biological distinction between the sexes ('the nerves that feed the brain would seem to differ in men and women' (Woolf 1992, 101)), and on a notion of androgyny as a reconciliation of male and female attributes. On Woolf's account everyone, whether male or female, exhibits some degree of androgyny, and 'the normal and comfortable state of being is that when the two live in harmony together, spiritually co-operating' (128). Although Woolf is heavily critical of men who 'are now writing only with the male side of their brains' and, specifically, of a critic whose 'mind seemed separated into different chambers' (132) she expresses her androgynous ideal in differential terms: 'man-womanly' and 'woman-manly' (128), implying an innate gender identity that is never wholly surmountable. This also strongly suggests that a separation between the two 'sides' is preserved, even in the androgynous mind; in her androgynous image of a man and a woman getting into a taxi (126) Woolf seems to desire a unity in which the division is eliminated, but the original distinction is preserved; the two categories 'male' and 'female' are subsumed into one whole, but remain distinct: Woolf seems to desire, fittingly enough, the simultaneous manifestation of two quite different concepts of androgyny.

In his essay on 'Style', Pater advances an argument that also expresses an oppositional concept of literary composition. He opens his essay by asserting the importance of retaining conceptual distinctions, such as that between poetry and prose (1920, 5), but only as useful descriptions. Pater refuses to commit to the absolute reality of these distinctions because, he claims, 'the line between fact and something quite different from external fact is, indeed, hard to draw' (8). Having established this caveat, Pater then groups various aspects of style under the general heading of 'mind and soul:—hard to ascertain philosophically, the distinction is real enough practically, for they often interfere, are sometimes in conflict, with each other' (25). 'Mind' Pater defines as a scholarly use of language, and an 'architectural conception of [the] work' (21); this association of mind with 'scholarship' in turn associates it with 'the male

conscience':

> The literary artist is of necessity a scholar, and in what he proposes to do will have in mind, first of all, the scholar and the scholarly conscience—the male conscience in this matter, as we must think it, under a system of education which still to so large an extent limits real scholarship to men (12)

This is followed, rather cryptically, with the assertion that 'in his self-criticism, he supposes always that sort of reader who will go (full of eyes) warily, considerately, though without consideration for him, over the ground which the female conscience traverses so lightly, so amiably' (12). What that 'ground' consists of is never made clear, and this is the only comment in the essay that relates 'the female conscious' to literary style. Although Pater's concept of soul does not explicitly exclude women, because literature is a product of 'the scholarly conscience—the male conscience', and because Pater defines 'soul' as a property of literature that emerges from the writer's scholarly use of language, he does effectively exclude women from his account.

In opposition to 'mind', Pater identifies 'soul': 'as a quality of style, at all events, soul is a fact, in certain writers—the way they have of absorbing language, of attracting it into the peculiar spirit they are of, with a subtlety which makes the actual result seem like some inexplicable inspiration' (25). He associates soul with an undefined religious quality in writing (25/6), and claims that it provides 'unity of atmosphere', where mind provides 'unity of design' (26): 'soul securing colour (or perfume, might we say) as mind secures form, the latter being essentially finite, the former vague or infinite, as the influence of a living person is practically infinite' (26/7). As such, the account of 'style' that Pater gives is one that subsumes, but preserves, the differences between mind and soul; like Woolf's 'androgyny', Pater's 'style' describes an ideal of a united whole, within which distinctions exist uncompromised.

Woolf's conception of masculine aspects of 'style' seems to correspond quite closely to Pater's ideas about what constitutes 'mind' in literature. Using the same architectural metaphor as Pater (23) to illustrate the challenge facing women writers, Woolf argues that 'a book is not made of sentences laid end to end, but of sentences built, if an image helps, into arcades or domes. And this shape too has been made by men out of their own needs for their own uses' (1992, 100). For Woolf, because 'freedom and fullness of expression are of the essence of the

art' (100), questions of style are crucial. Famously objecting to female writers' attempts to use 'male' sentences, the 'masculine' aspects of style for Pater (1920, 12) and Woolf originate in education and also, for Woolf, in larger cultural institutions, and common assumptions about gender. In her account of literary style, Woolf developed her account of its 'feminine' aspects more fully which, she claims, originate in women's exclusion from education; from their experiences in 'the common sitting-room' (1992, 87). For Pater, 'soul' in literature was an expression of 'character': of the artist's characteristic understanding of the world (1920, 27). 'Character' formed the basis of Woolf's notion of a feminine style of writing but, following Austen, Woolf situates the female writer's power in her ability to capture the characters of others:

> all the literary training that a woman had in the early nineteenth century was training in the observation of character […] People's feelings were impressed on her; personal relations were always before her eyes. Therefore, when the middle-class woman took to writing, she naturally wrote novels (1992, 87)

As such, Woolf's distinction between 'male' and 'female' writing styles is defined according to a similar set of distinctions that Pater uses to define 'mind' and 'soul', and, like Pater, Woolf desires these various aspects of style to be in harmony. When Woolf returns to a man's writing after considering her theory of androgyny, she finds that it is 'honest as the day and logical as the sun' (131), and instantiates other properties of 'mind' that Pater praised: 'it was so direct, so straightforward after the writing of women. It indicated such freedom of mind, such liberty of person, such confidence in himself' (129-30); although Woolf wants 'to get the sense that the writer is communicating his experience with perfect fullness' (136), what she finds most objectionable is the domineering egotism of men, which silences women: 'Alan had views and Phoebe was quenched in the flood of his views' (130). Woolf wanted women to write as women, but not to emphasise their sex; to write unconsciously as women, drawing on their experience, but not privileging it above that of men. She felt that women's writing is spoiled equally by railing against men as by deference to them, because in each case the writer will show their biases, because they will be 'thinking of something other than the thing itself' (1992, 96).

Woolf's distinction between the 'male' and 'female' in literature, and her ideal of androgynous artistic creation, is perhaps most clearly expressed in her novel *To the Lighthouse*, which has

long been recognised as a text which exemplifies the theory of androgyny that Woolf articulated in *A Room of One's Own*. It is a commonplace in criticism of *To the Lighthouse* to observe that Mr and Mrs Ramsay provide a basic opposition of male and female attributes. Although Mr Ramsay is a rather unsympathetic character, oscillating between self-glorification and self-pity, he also has positive intellectual qualities: other characters observe how 'it was his power, his gift, suddenly to shed all superfluities, to shrink and diminish so that he looked barer and felt sparer, even physically, yet lost none of his intensity of mind' (Woolf 1927, 50). This is a strong example of what Pater refers to as 'ascesis', an essential element of style whereby (harking back to the original Epicurean philosophy of moderation and moderate self-denial), through the removal of superfluous material in art, one achieves an impersonal style. In person, through 'abstinence, [and] strenuous self-control' (Pater 1885a, 31), one may also achieve a personal ascesis, characterized by austerity and self-possession, and which Marius' friend Cornelius manifests: 'the expression of military hardness, or ascesis' (169). Through his possession of this 'gift', Ramsay also achieves impersonality: 'having thrown away […] all gestures and fripperies, all trophies of nuts and roses, [he] shrunk so that not only fame but even his own name was forgotten by him' (Woolf 1927, 50).

Mrs Ramsay, by contrast, seems to embody Pater's ideal critic who, in contrast to the masculine scholar, relies on natural intuition: 'will go (full of eyes) warily, considerately, though without consideration for him, over the ground which the female conscience traverses so lightly, so amiably' (1920, 12). Mrs Ramsay possesses this intuitive feminine understanding ('she knew without having learnt. Her simplicity fathomed what clever people falsified. Her singleness of mind […] gave her, naturally, this swoop and fall of the spirit upon truth which delighted, eased, sustained' (Woolf 1927, 34)), and when Mr Ramsay approaches her for reassurance and praise, she rebukes him, responding 'warily, considerately, though without consideration for him':

> He wanted sympathy. He was a failure, he said. Mrs. Ramsay flashed her needles. […] She blew the words back at him. "Charles Tansley..." she said. But he must have more than that. It was sympathy he wanted, to be assured of his genius, first of all, and then to be taken within the circle of life, warmed and soothed, to have his senses restored to him, his barrenness made fertile (Woolf 1927, 43).

As this passage hints, as well as fulfilling the secondary role of critic in Pater's stylistic

scheme, Mrs Ramsay also seems to possess Pater's 'plenary substance' of 'soul' (1920, 27); her 'delicious fecundity, [her] fountain and spray of life' (Woolf 1927, 43), exemplifies Pater's idea of 'soul' as being infinitely generative (1920, 27). The dichotomy between Mr Ramsay's scholarly 'barrenness' and Mrs Ramsay's humanistic 'fertility' is the basic gender opposition that underlies the entire novel, and may well be derived from Pater's concepts of 'mind' and 'soul'.

Lily (generally regarded as an archetype of Woolfian androgyny), paints a picture that incorporates and balances Mr and Mrs Ramsay's gendered characteristics (Kaivola 1999, 251), so as to 'achieve that razor edge of balance between two opposite forces'. As such, Lily's reconciliation of Mr and Mrs Ramsay aspires towards a harmony of different influences that instantiates Woolf's androgynous ideal in *A Room of One's Own*, but also resembles Pater's aesthetic ideal in 'Style'. Anticipating Mrs Ramsay's metaphor for 'the masculine intelligence, which ran up and down, crossed this way and that, like iron girders spanning the swaying fabric, upholding the world' (Woolf 1927, 115), Lily envisions her picture as 'colour burning on a framework of steel; the light of a butterfly's wing lying upon the arches of a cathedral' (54), a description which borrows Pater's architectural metaphor (1920, 23), and also on his idea of 'soul [as] securing colour' (26). However, this reconciliation of elements is not an endeavour that she undertakes alone.

In 1922, in 'Old Bloomsbury', Woolf described the importance of friendship between men and women for the cultivation of free and equal intellectual engagement (Schulkind 2002, 48-53). In *To the Lighthouse* William Bankes provides Lily with friendship (her attraction to Bankes is, specifically, 'without any sexual feeling' (Woolf 1927, 29)), and, in 'The Lighthouse' section Mr Carmichael provides her with a strong sense of companionship, despite their almost complete abstention from conversation. In contrast to Tansley's attacks on female artists, and Mr Ramsay's demands for sympathy (her failure to respond to which, she feels, is 'immensely to her discredit, sexually' (166)), Bankes and Carmichael provide Lily with the kind of support and companionship that Woolf identified as desirable in 1922. Whilst several critics have recognised Carmichael as an androgyne (Rado 1997, 152), and have commented on his resistance to Mrs Ramsay, Bankes is also a very sympathetic figure for Lily; he too resists Mrs Ramsay's wish that he and Lily should marry and, in his criticism of Mr Ramsay, enables Lily to voice hers. At one point she thinks of him as 'the finest human being that I know' (Woolf 1927, 29).

Bankes and Carmichael also represent creative figures in the novel, whose creativity complements Lily's. Bankes comments in the manuscript that 'in sciences there is creation; in art, creation, but in [politics] there is nothing but abuse' (Woolf 1927, 242). The scientific and artistic creativity of Bankes and Carmichael suggests a further refinement of the opposition between 'mind' and 'soul', the 'scholarly' and the 'spiritual', that Pater considers in 'Style'. Both are highly educated males, exemplifying the notion of the 'the scholarly conscience [as being] the male conscience', but they present a far less aggressive form of scholarship than Mr Ramsay's. Significantly, for those attempting a paterian reading of Woolf, William Bankes and Mr Carmichael are each twice described as being 'impersonal', a term that is not used anywhere else in the novel: in 'Style', before his final comments on what differentiates 'great' from 'good' art (1920, 37/8), Pater summarises his thesis thus: 'if the style be the man, in all the colour and intensity of a veritable apprehension, it will be in a real sense "impersonal"' (37). In Bankes' case, the connection between his scientific creativity and 'the essence of his being' is very clearly indicated on two occasions: 'I respect you ([Lily] addressed him silently) in every atom; you are not vain; you are entirely impersonal; you are finer than Mr. Ramsay […] you live for science' (Woolf 1927, 29) and, later, she notes 'his cleanliness and his impersonality, and the white scientific coat which seemed to clothe him' (53). Similar to these descriptions of Bankes, and even truer to Pater's ideal, is how Lily imagines Carmichael's poetry: 'it was extremely impersonal; it said something about death; it said very little about love. There was an impersonality about him' (211). In this case, to borrow Pater's phrase, it is very clear that 'the style be the man', and also that both are 'impersonal'.

Marion Thain has argued for Mr Carmichael's importance in the novel's aesthetic scheme, by his enabling Lily to 'have her vision' at the novel's finale (2007, 31), and Mr Carmichael's importance at this point in the novel is evident from a diary entry that Woolf wrote in September 1926, when she was about to begin redrafting. Tackling the problem of 'how to bring Lily and Mr R. together & make a combination of interest at the end', she rejects an ending that would reduce the characters' and picture's importance in relation to Mr Ramsay's atheistic gesture, preferring to focus on a collaborative effort between Lily and Carmichael:

> I had meant to end with R. climbing on to the rock. If so, what becomes [of] Lily & her picture? Should there be a final page about her & Carmichael looking at the picture & summing up R's character? (1982a, 106)

Lily and Mr Carmichael's 'summing up' is not just a way to round off the story; the question implies a deeper concern, with the symbolic role of Lily and her picture. The question that Woolf poses in her diary, as much as being 'what happens to Lily and her picture?' is 'what do Lily and her picture become?' Certainly, the different kinds of 'becoming' that occur in the novel would correlate with such a reading: things becoming symbolical is an important element in the aesthetic development of the latter section of the book; near the beginning of 'The Lighthouse', Mr Ramsay's words, 'like everything else this strange morning the […] became symbols, wrote themselves all over the grey-green walls' (Woolf 1927, 160/1); during the expedition James's 'hand on the tiller had become symbolical' (183) to Cam, and later, to James, Mr Ramsay 'looked as if he had become physically what was always at the back of both of their minds--that loneliness which was for both of them the truth about things' (219).

In the finished text, rather than have Lily and Carmichael 'summing up', as Woolf had planned, Carmichael 'crowned the occasion, she thought, when his hand slowly fell, as if she had seen him let fall from his great height a wreath of violets and asphodels which, fluttering slowly, lay at length upon the earth' (225). This gesture, which is prompted by Carmichael's 'surveying, tolerantly, compassionately, [mankind's] final destiny' (225), is remarkably similar to the gesture that Lily imagines Prue performing as she passes out of life into death: 'she let her flowers fall from her basket, scattered and tumbled them on to the grass and, reluctantly and hesitatingly, […] went too. Down fields, across valleys, white, flower-strewn--that was how she would have painted it' (218). When Lily imagines this scene, she imagines herself and Prue joining Mrs Ramsay: 'the three of them together, Mrs. Ramsay walking rather fast in front' (218). This and the image of 'crowning', connect both Prue and Carmichael to an earlier vision of Mrs. Ramsay:

> raising to her forehead a wreath of white flowers with which she went [stepping] across fields among whose folds, purplish and soft, among whose flowers, hyacinth or lilies, she vanished. It was some trick of the painter's eye. For days after [Lily] had heard of her death she had seen her thus, putting her wreath to her forehead and going unquestioningly with her companion, a shade across the fields (196/7).

In Lily's painterly imagination, the grouping of Carmichael's final gesture with Prue and Mrs Ramsay's, suggests that it is an essentially feminine gesture (Bankes, a devoted admirer of

Mrs Ramsay's beauty, also imagines how 'the Graces assembling seemed to have joined hands in meadows of asphodel to compose that face' (34)). Free from pretensions to masculinity, Carmichael is able to perform an expressive feminine gesture that counterbalances Mr Ramsay's masculine defiance ('There is no God' (224)), and identifies him as a man-womanly artist.

Carmichael also seems to possess a 'plenary substance'; where Mrs Ramsay has her fountain, Lily imagines that Mr Carmichael, 'sailing serenely through a world which satisfied all his wants, […] had only to put down his hand where he lay on the lawn to fish up anything he wanted' (194/5), but Lily resists the temptation to depend upon him for support. Instead, she feels that she is able to communicate with Carmichael without words; in the final moments Carmichael says: '"They will have landed," and [Lily] felt that she had been right. They had not needed to speak. They had been thinking the same things and he had answered her without her asking him anything' (225). To have asked Carmichael for support would have been to impose upon him as Mr Ramsay imposes on those around him: to have broken the neutrality of their relation and upset the 'razor edge of balance' and artistic autonomy that are required for the creation of an androgynous artwork. By maintaining an entirely impersonal relation throughout, Lily is able to 'have her vision', and to discover that, actually, 'they had been thinking the same things'; in the impersonal presence of this man-womanly artist Lily is able to find expression for her own woman-manly artistic vision.

When Carmichael lets his hand fall at the end of the novel, this is not the first time that he has symbolically intervened in the narrative, and his role in each of the novel's three major sections would seem to reinforce a reading of Carmichael's character as an androgynous creator. Rosenfeld has commented on the significance, during 'Time Passes', of the repeated 'vignette' of Mr Carmichael reading by candlelight (2006, 358), which brings some degree of wholeness and coherence to 'Time Passes', and creates a continuity between the novel's two halves. Carmichael, again through a symbolical intervention, also helps to conclude the novel's first section, 'The Window', the last two episodes of which are primarily concerned with Mrs Ramsay's role as a mother and wife. Preceding this is a dinner party scene in which Mrs Ramsay practices her feminine art of bringing her guests together, by 'merging and flowing and creating' (Woolf 1927, 91) (thus creating the 'unity of atmosphere' that Pater described as a property of 'soul' (1920, 26)). This scene is contained entirely in one section, which begins with Mrs Ramsay taking her seat, and ends with her leaving the room, a 'scene'

(121) which Mr Carmichael completes, through a poetic recital, before Mrs Ramsay's return to the domestic realm.

Like most of the characters in *To the Lighthouse*, Carmichael seems to be a composite figure (Lee1992, 229), a combination of characteristics that Woolf drew from a variety of sources. One source of seems to have been a Professor Wolstenholme (Barrow-Green, 2004), whom Woolf described her vague memories of in 'Sketch of the Past' (Schulkind 2002, 87) and whom Leslie Stephen described as 'a brilliant mathematician at Cambridge, whose bohemian tastes and heterodox opinions had made a Cambridge career unadvisable, who had tried to become a hermit in Wastdale' (Lee1992, 229). The parallels between Wolstenholme and Pater's lives are quite clear (each having been a promising academic who retreated from public life after his views and lifestyle prevented his professional advancement), and the possibility that elements of Pater's character have been used to enrich Carmichael's character are reinforced by his literary interests, and his having failed at Oxford, rather than Cambridge.

Thain has argued that in Woolf's characterisation of Carmichael, the 'cocktail of drugs, poetry, translation, unmanly demeanour, and same-sex communion draws what had already become, by the time Woolf was writing, the unmistakable caricature of the 1890s poet' (2007, 27), and Carmichael's repeated association with the colour yellow (Stewart 1985, 441-2) might reinforce such a reading. However, Carmichael's poetry, if it is as Lily imagines, would express little of the sensory and emotional extravagance of decadence; rather, it proceeds 'slowly and sonorously. It was seasoned and mellow. It was about the desert and the camel. It was about the palm tree and the sunset. It was extremely impersonal; it said something about death; it said very little about love' (Woolf 1927, 211), a description that is arguably more reminiscent of Pater's *Marius the Epicurean*.

The chronology of the novel is also somewhat ambiguous; although 'Time Passes' describes a ten-year period during which the first world war takes place, this still allows for considerable flexibility, and has led to some disagreement between readings (Lee 1992, 247; Thain 2007, 29). As 'The Window' takes place during September (Woolf 1927, 24), before the war breaks out, the latest that it could be set would be 1913, fixing the latest date for 'The Lighthouse' as 1923. As 'The Lighthouse' takes place after the war, the earliest it could be set would be 1918, fixing the earliest date for 'The Window' as 1908. In this case 'The Window' would have to be

set between 1908 and 1913, and 'The Lighthouse' between 1918 and 1923.

During 'Time Passes', 'Mr. Carmichael brought out a volume of poems that spring, which had an unexpected success. The war, people said, had revived their interest in poetry' (146), and during 'The Lighthouse' Lily mentions that the poems were written 'forty years ago' (210). Placing this date is difficult, as Woolf deliberately distorted her description of the passing of time in 'Time Passes', and Thain argues that this places the date of composition in the 1880s or 1890s (2007, 27). However, the initial events of 'Time Passes' seem to proceed as follows: after the family leaves, the leaves fall from the trees, and Mrs Ramsay dies (Woolf 1927, 140); Mrs McNab makes her annual visit to clean the house (142-3); the spring arrives (143); Prue marries 'that May' (143) and dies 'that summer' (144), apparently the summer that war breaks out (144/5); Andrew dies, apparently later that same summer, or in the autumn (145), and 'Mr. Carmichael brought out a volume of poems that spring' (146).

If, as the text seems to indicate, Prue marries in the May after the September of 'The Window', and in the year that the war starts (144/5), this would be 1914, fixing the date of 'The Window' as 1913, and 'The Lighthouse' as 1923. If Andrew dies in the first summer, or autumn, of the war and Carmichael publishes the following Spring, this would place Carmichael's publication in 1915. Even assuming that this chronology is correct, some ambiguity surrounds the date of the poems' composition; when Lily says that they 'published things he had written forty years ago' (210), it is ambiguous as to whether he wrote them forty years before their being published during the war (i.e. 1875 or, at the latest, 1878), or forty years before Lily makes this statement (i.e. 1883). In either case it seems that Thain's estimate is slightly later that the text itself suggests. Bearing in mind that Lily's 'forty years' may only be an approximation, if Carmichael wrote his poems in the 1870s, or early 1880s, he was writing during Pater's peak years: Pater's *Renaissance* was first published in 1873, with revised editions published in 1877 and 1888, and *Marius the Epicurean* was first published in 1885. The variability of Carmichael's influence is also congruent with Pater's, whose reputation recovered significantly in the post-war years, provoking a backlash from critics such as Wyndham Lewis (1967, 223-4).

Thain also picks up on Carmichael's resemblance to a pagan god at the novel's climax (2007, 31), and this places him within a network of references to paganism and classical mythology, which was one of Pater's areas of expertise, and (as *Marius the Epicurean* demonstrates) a

major source of his philosophy (1885b, 34-5). The pagan imagery that is associated with Carmichael is initially introduced during the dinner party scene in 'The Window' (Woolf 1927, 28): his 'long white robe', his 'chanting' (120) and his doing Mrs Ramsay 'homage' (121), all have a religious character (Blotner 1956, 551). Regarding a plate of fruit, Mrs Ramsay thinks

> of a trophy fetched from the bottom of the sea, of Neptune's banquet, […] Thus brought up suddenly into the light it seemed possessed of great size and depth […] to her pleasure (for it brought them into sympathy momentarily) she saw that Augustus too feasted his eyes on the same plate of fruit, […] looking together united them (Woolf 1927, 105/6).

and Elliott has noted how the mention of Neptune, who carries a trident, connects this scene with Mr Carmichael's portrayal at the novel's finale (1980, 362): 'surging up, puffing slightly, […] like an old pagan god, shaggy, with weeds in his hair and the trident […] in his hand' (Woolf 1927, 225).

When Mr Ramsay (who recites Tennyson elsewhere in the novel) begins to recite a poem to Mrs Ramsay, he seems to be enacting the Victorian romantic ideal, as Woolf imagines it in *A Room of One's Own*, where men chant Tennyson's love poetry to women, who respond by chanting Rossetti's (1992, 18-19). However, the fragments of verse that are inserted into the narrative are from a poem which wasn't published until 1945; it was by Charles Isaac Elton, who never published during his lifetime, and Woolf learned it from her husband, who knew it by heart (Shaw 2005, 90). This choice may indicate that Woof wished to avoid the literary-historical baggage that would have accompanied a known author's work (such as Shakespeare's, which features in the next two sections of 'The Window'), thus denying the reader of a historical context, or pre-existing interpretive framework in which to place the poem; when Mr Ramsay begins, Mrs Ramsay recognises that 'he was repeating something' (Woolf 1927, 120), but she also has the sense that the words are impersonal: 'as if they were floating like flowers on water out there, cut off from them all, as if no one had said them, but they had come into existence of themselves' (120). Encouraged by Mrs Ramsay to view the poem in this way, and denied of any historical context, Woolf might have intended that the poem give the impression of expressing Pater's universal, ahistoric 'human spirit' (1998, xxxii).

Though written in a fairly modern idiom, the poem also has a slightly dated feel, with lines such as 'the China rose is all abloom', which makes it hard to identify with any specific school of poetry. Shaw, deducing from Leonard Woolf's alterations to the transcriptions that he made of the poem, suggests that 'the date, "Whitsuntide 1899", was [probably] written on Lytton Strachey's manuscript copy. Whether this is the date of the poem's composition, its dictation to Lytton Strachey, or both, is problematic' (2005, 90), and he concedes that 'The date of composition of the poem is not known' (91). However, Elton wrote poems throughout his adult life, at least as early as when he was at university (93) in the 1860s (Atlay 2004). The poem is, by definition, late nineteenth-century, and it would not be unreasonable to suggest that it could be construed, broadly, as a paterian, aestheticist poem: concerned with memory, change and transience (the appearance of a line from the poem in the manuscript version of 'Time Passes' (Lee 1992, 245) reinforces this aspect of its meaning), drawing on classical imagery, the speaker encourages the subject to embrace the present by recreating an idealised past. This recreation of an idealised past is also present in the image of Mr Carmichael as a pagan god, both here and at the novel's climax, and his natural ability to evoke the distant, Hellenic past in the minds those around him has strongly paterian connotations (for reason that will become clear in the next chapter).

At the time of publication, Woolf's readers would not have known the poet's gender; when Mr Ramsay begins to recite the poem, to Mrs Ramsay 'the words seemed to be spoken by her own voice, outside herself' (Woolf 1927, 120), strongly suggesting that Woolf wanted this to be understood as an androgynous artwork (the sense of mystical communication that this poem creates between Mr and Mrs Ramsay also features in 'The Lighthouse', when Lily feels that Carmichael 'did after all hear the things she could not say' (194)). When Carmichael intervenes, taking over the recital, he eliminates the romantic, Victorian element from the scene, transforming it into an impersonal homage to Mrs Ramsay's beauty. 'Beauty' was the primary interest of pre-decadent aesthetes, and Leighton has identified the recurring references to Mrs Ramsay's beauty as an essentially aestheticist concern, which runs throughout the novel (2007, 125-43). The recital is also another moment where Carmichael performs a crowning gesture and would, presumably, have contributed to Lily's assumption that his poetry, like his manner, is 'impersonal'.

As well as appearing in *To the Lighthouse*, the name 'Carmichael' also appears as the name of a sexually and stylistically avant-garde (fictional) female novelist in *A Room of One's Own*

(Woolf 1992, 104) whose début novel, *Life's Adventure*, sounds much like Woolf's *The Voyage Out*. Miller has asked: 'is Mary Carmichael the daughter of Augustus Carmichael?' (1983, 184), but I would suggest that Woolf may have had something more subtle in mind. Between 'Mr Carmichael's appearance in *To the Lighthouse* (in 1927) and 'Mary Carmichael's appearance (in 1929), in texts that were deeply concerned with questions of gender and androgyny, Woolf wrote (in 1928) her novel *Orlando*, in which she names Pater as one of the 'friends' who has helped her to write the book (Woolf 1928, 5). *Orlando* is a 'biography' of Vita Sackville-West, in which the protagonist changes sex, from male to female. In the year 1928, the names 'Orlando' and 'Carmichael' simultaneously went through the same process of transition in Woolf's writing, passing from the male to the female gender, and from one generation to another; a literary transition that symbolises, in each context, a form of inheritance and a transference of power. Though Woolf stresses the importance of Mary Carmichael's female ancestors, it seems unlikely that Woolf would, upon reflection, approve of a purely female (and thus 'sterile') lineage, and 'Mary Carmichael' is perhaps intended to draw attention back to Lily's friend and artistic companion who, as much as Lily, exemplifies her ideal of the androgynous artist: if Mr Carmichael is composed partly of Pater, then Pater may be among the female writer's literary ancestors.

By drawing upon, rather than challenging Pater's writing in *To the Lighthouse* Woolf seems to be standing in a more mature relation to Pater than that which we find in *The Voyage Out*, but one still perhaps defined by some degree of distance and deference. The completion of *To the Lighthouse* in 1927 seems to have been a watershed moment in Woolf's development as a writer. Having written what she felt to be an important novel, and unburdened herself psychologically (Schulkind 2002, 92-3), when she began *Orlando* in 1928, she was giving herself a holiday from her more serious work, and an opportunity to celebrate her lover Vita Sackville-West. In this text we also detect a change in her attitude to her literary precursors. Describing him in her 'Preface' as a 'friend' (1928, 5), she is now able to engage with Pater as an equal.

3. *Orlando*, *Between the Acts* and Pater's 'History' of the Renaissance

Perry Meisel has recognised that

> *Orlando* is the consummate paterian portrait, asserting as it does the ideality of a strong and unified temperament capable of subduing time and sexuality alike to the law of personality alone. Moreover, like Gaston, Marius, or Emerald Uthwart, the fictional Orlando moves in the air of real history and in the society of real personages, very often the poetic, philosophical, and political heroes of the day, with Orlando's Elizabeth, Shakespeare and Pope doubling Marius's Marcus Aurelius and Apuleius or Gaston's Bruno in a kind of multiplied and concentrated use of the device in a single text, with *Marius* the structural prototype despite the immense difference in tone. Above all, like Pater's portraits, too, Orlando's story is organised by means of its setting in a series of significant transitional moments in history like those that give *Marius*, *Gaston*, and *The Renaissance* a resonant metamorphicity and a problematic that focuses each book on questions of development and repetition. (1980, 45)

It therefore seems odd that in a 244-page book, this half-page, and a few passing remarks (44, 159, 174n, 234), constitute Meisel's entire analysis of the novel: the briefest analysis that he provides of any of Woolf's major works. This may be because this text provides some of the strongest evidence against Meisel's thesis that Woolf was deliberately trying to deny Pater's influence: far from being an oddly isolated moment of candour, the acknowledgement of Pater's influence in *Orlando*'s 'Preface' (5), published in 1928, continues a trend, outlined in my introduction, of increasingly positive comments about Pater that Woolf published throughout the 1920s. *Orlando* provides precisely the kind of evidence that Fleishman was referring to when he challenged Meisel for not engaging with Woolf's explicit references to Pater in her texts (1981, 253).

This chapter will expand upon Meisel's observations that '*Orlando* is the consummate paterian portrait', and his observation that it is structured around 'a series of significant transitional moments in history'. Arguing that *Orlando* may be construed as one of the most overtly paterian of Woolf's texts, the first sections of this chapter will focus on the parallels

between this work and Pater's *Renaissance*, arguing that as well as displaying the characteristic traits of an ideal paterian aesthete and artist, Orlando is a figure who resembles Pater's conception of the Mona Lisa in various important ways. In the latter half of this chapter I will consider *Between the Acts* as a text that portrays competing interpretations of paterian aesthetics in the face of oncoming war. In particular I will highlight possible parallels between Miss LaTrobe's aesthetic project and the Vorticist project, which drew upon an implicit, misogynistic chauvinism in Pater's thinking which, as we have already seen, seems to have concerned Woolf in her earlier engagements with Pater.

Schlack has observed that the 'names scattered about Woolf's Preface are more than token acknowledgements of literary debts. They are evidence of the considerable tradition out of which even so singular a work as *Orlando* springs. They establish a *context*' (1979, 79 Schlack's italics), and DiBattista notes how Woolf engages in 'extended parodies' of the authors whom she mentions in her 'Preface' (1980, 126). Perhaps the most obvious of these, in relation to Pater's thinking (and an aspect of Woolf's literary style that Meisel identifies, in general, as strongly paterian (1980, 81)) is 'ascesis': the idea that the artist should remove unnecessary material from their writing (in 'The Modern Essay' Woolf identifies Pater's writings as being exemplary of this practice (1994, 218)). In 'Style', Pater states that: 'in literature […] the true artist may be best recognised by his tact of omission' (1920, 18), an idea which Woolf reformulates as: 'the cardinal labour of composition, which is excision' (Woolf 1928, 51). However, as well as being endorsed in this apparently serious statement, ascesis in *Orlando* becomes a device that Woolf deploys to create humorous effects, and to skip over material that is uninteresting to read or write about (74). It also becomes a means for Woolf to comment on the nature of the text that she is writing, on the nature of biography as a genre, on the conventions of narrative more broadly, and on the idea of ascesis itself. When writing his poem, 'The Oak Tree', for example, because Orlando 'scratched out as many lines as he wrote in, the sum of them was often, at the end of the year, rather less than at the beginning, and it looked as if in the process of writing the poem would be completely unwritten' (77). Later, reporting a conversation involving Alexander Pope, the narrator writes:

> Then the little gentleman said,
> He said next,
> He said finally,

> Here, it cannot be denied, was true wit, true wisdom, true profundity (141).

Similarly, when Orlando first meets her husband, the traditional courtship narrative is entirely omitted, by both the narrator and Orlando:

> 'Madam,' the man cried, leaping to the ground, 'you're hurt!'
> 'I'm dead, sir!' she replied.
>
> A few minutes later, they became engaged.
>
> The morning after, as they sat at breakfast, he told her his name (174).

Although Woolf qualifies her report of Pope's wit with a footnote ('These sayings are too well known to require repetition' (141)), without a knowledge of Woolf's interest in ascesis, these omissions make very little sense, and thus lose much of their comic potential.

There are other aspects of Woolf's text, however, that suggest a deeper, more sympathetic interest in the earlier writer. Invoking Pater's famous image of the 'hard, gemlike flame' (1998, 152) the narrator notes early on in the novel how 'the moon and stars blazed with the hard fixity of diamonds' (Woolf 1928, 26). This is perhaps the most explicit allusion to paterian imagery in the novel, but there are many others, often connected with Orlando's character and temperament.

In the passage from which the image of the gemlike flame is taken, Pater asks how one might achieve an ideal existence of continuous aesthetic stimulation, and offers the 'hard, gemlike flame' as a symbol of this state: 'how shall we pass most swiftly from point to point, and be present always at the focus where the greatest number of vital forces unite in their purest energy? To burn always with this hard, gemlike flame, to maintain this ecstasy, is success in life' (1998, 152). For Pater, maintaining this 'ecstasy' was an ongoing pursuit, and in his infatuation with Sasha (a Russian Princess), Orlando expresses a similar desire: desperately trying to find words adequate to her beauty, he 'ran wild in his transports [...] vowing that he would chase the flame, dive for the gem, and so on and so on' (Woolf 1928, 33). This pursuit of the aesthetic ideal of continuous, intense sensation: of 'ecstasy', is reaffirmed towards the end of the novel, when Orlando concludes that 'ecstasy--it's ecstasy that matters' (200). If we

were able to only tentatively suggest that Mr Carmichael in *To the Lighthouse* might be a paterian aesthete, there seems no question at all as to whether Orlando is. As Meisel notes, over the course of the novel Orlando seeks to immerse herself in the highest culture, lavishly decorates her home, and seeks out the company of the most brilliant wits; in the latter part of the novel the word 'ecstasy', becomes the key expression of Orlando's mindset, and she repeats it to herself several times (199, 200, 227).

As well as demonstrating an intuitive sympathy with Pater's aesthetic theory, Orlando is also instinctively drawn to two figures who might, like Orlando, be regarded as 'consummate paterian portraits': figures who are also able to transcend the limitations of time, they share various important characteristics with the Mona Lisa, as described by Pater in *The Renaissance*. In Pater's essay on Leonardo da Vinci, he describes the Mona Lisa as a woman who has 'learned the secrets of the grave; and has been a diver in deep seas and keeps their fallen day about her; and trafficked for strange webs with Eastern merchants; and, as Leda, was the mother of Helen of Troy, and, as Saint Anne, the mother of Mary' (1998, 80).

In 'The Modern Esssay', an essay that Woolf initially published in 1922 in the *TLS* (1994, 216- 226), and reprinted in the first *Common Reader*, she quoted this passage for its ubiquity, suggesting her own over-familiarity with it through her statement that it is 'too thumb-marked to slip naturally into the context [of an anthology]' (218). The imagery of the deep sea, and the metaphor of diving that are present in this extract were also to become important tropes in *Orlando*, and during his first, brief impression of the poet Nick Green, Orlando asks 'but how speak to a man who does not see you? who sees ogres, satyrs, perhaps the depths of the sea instead?' (Woolf 1928, 16). The second figure to capture Orlando's imagination is Sasha (26/7), who 'had eyes which looked as if they had been fished from the bottom of the sea' (27).

More significant than their marine associations is the property that the Mona Lisa is perhaps most famous for, and both Green and Sasha possess a strange, slightly disturbing inscrutability. On meeting Nick Green again, many years after first seeing him, Orlando is perplexed by his enigmatic nature: 'Orlando for all his knowledge of mankind was puzzled where to place him. There was something about him which belonged neither to servant, squire, or noble. […] The eyes were brilliant, but the lips hung loose and slobbered. It was the expression of the face--as a whole, however, that was disquieting' (59). Sasha, like Green,

is similarly inscrutable: 'ransack the language as he might, words failed him. […] For in all she said, however open she seemed and voluptuous, there was something hidden; in all she did, however daring, there was something concealed' (32). The description continues, and to capture the sense of this tantalising inscrutability Orlando draws, significantly, on the paterian image of the gem and the flame: 'so the green flame seems hidden in the emerald' (32). It is this ambiguous inscrutability that Orlando finds so appealing, and that provokes his vow to 'chase the flame [and] dive for the gem' (33), a vow that mixes the imagery of the gemlike flame with the metaphor of diving. In Pater's essay on Leonardo da Vinci, there is also an allusion to androgyny that may have appealed to Woolf, and may have contributed to her depiction of Orlando's attraction to Sasha: just as Pater imagines that one portrait, of 'a face of doubtful sex' (1998, 74), may represent 'Leonardo's type of womanly beauty' (74), Orlando's ideal of the beautiful is fully embodied by Sasha, whose sex is, initially, also ambiguous (Woolf 1928, 26/7).

Along with these relatively minor 'portraits', Orlando herself is, as Meisel notes, 'the consummate paterian portrait' (1980, 45), and in delving into the past he too becomes, metaphorically, a diver in deep seas; trying to remember the period in which he met Sasha and Green, Orlando finds that 'every single thing, once he tried to dislodge it from its place in his mind, he found thus cumbered with other matter like the lump of glass which, after a year at the bottom of the sea, is grown about with bones and dragon-flies, and coins and the tresses of drowned women' (69). Other important parallels are present, and where the Mona Lisa appears to have existed through different ages and civilisations, Orlando literally has. The novel begins when he is sixteen, during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558 - 1603), and the midst of the English Renaissance (13). At some point in the early 1600s we are told that Orlando is 'thirty, or thereabouts' (61-2, 68), but is still 'thirty' when, sometime in the late seventeenth, or early eighteenth century (246, n1-2), she becomes a woman (98); at some point in the Victorian era Orlando is 'a year or two past thirty' (168), and in 1928 is thirty-six (206/9). Alongside this preternatural youthfulness, Orlando is also able to access experiences from other, later phases of life: 'it would be no exaggeration to say that he would go out after breakfast a man of thirty and come home to dinner a man of fifty-five at least' (68).

The multiplicity of selves and periods in Leonardo's (or, rather, Pater's) Mona Lisa is imitated by Woolf in her construction of 'Orlando', who is explicitly described, at length, as containing multiple selves (Woolf 1928, 211-214). The Mona Lisa has apparently been able to live these

many lives by having 'been dead many times and learned the secrets of the grave' (Pater 1998, 80). Although, for the sake of biographical continuity, Orlando cannot die at any point in the novel, he experiences prolonged periods of sleep on three occasions during the narrative, and each one signifies a transition into a new phase of life. As Sandra Gilbert notes, 'Orlando's seven-day sleep, a figure for oblivion or death, prepares us for his Jacobean preoccupation with "the skull beneath the skin", on display in [the second] chapter' (Woolf 1928, 240), a preoccupation that leads him, like Marius, to spend time among the graves of his ancestors (50/1). In response to Orlando's death, the narrator asks: 'are we so made that we have to take death in small doses daily or we could not go on with the business of living? […] Had Orlando, worn out by the extremity of his suffering, died for a week, and then come to life again?' (48/9)

Both having, metaphorically, died many times, the most important similarity between Pater's Mona Lisa, and Woolf's Orlando is that their existence encompasses the experiences of many ages and lifetimes. Pater writes that:

> The fancy of a perpetual life, sweeping together ten thousand experiences, is an old one; and modern philosophy has conceived the idea of humanity as wrought upon by, and summing up in itself, all modes of thought and life. Certainly Lady Lisa might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea (1998, 80).

Like the Mona Lisa, 'Orlando the modern has a very complex and self-contradictory subjectivity because s/he has memory traces of all her/his previous existences' (Lokke 1992, 236), and in the later pages of the novel, as Orlando drives through London she calls upon the different aspects of her personality, the different roles that she has assumed, and the different people that she has been:

> she had a great variety of selves to call upon, far more than we have been able to find room for, since a biography is considered complete if it merely accounts for six or seven selves, whereas a person may well have as many thousand. Choosing then, only those selves we have found room for, Orlando may now have called on the boy who cut the nigger's head down; […] the Courtier; or upon the Ambassador; […] or she may have wanted the woman to come to her; the Gipsy; the Fine Lady; the Hermit; [etc.] (Woolf 1928, 213).

Denisoff has commented on the importance of portraiture and ekphrasis in *Orlando*, identifying 'the inclusion of visual portraits into *Orlando*' as a way for Woolf to create 'a new significatory system arising from the dynamics between the sister arts' (1999, 259/260): as well as describing Orlando in words, Woolf inserted five pictures of 'Orlando' into the text itself. Readers of Pater, however, will know that ekphrasis is not a 'new' system for generating meaning at all, but one of creative interpretation, of a kind that led Pater to be repeatedly accused of 'obscuring the distinction between criticism and creation' (Buckler 1987, 37). In the composition of the Mona Lisa, Pater describes Leonardo taking his subject and abstracting a masterpiece of vast metaphysical complexity from her: a description that many art critics would more comfortably ascribe to Pater's critical process than to Leonardo's artistic method. Pater's criticism, which is more an act of artistic creation than of traditional scholarship, foreshadows Woolf's approach to biography; Burns' description of *Orlando* is equally true of Pater's account of the Mona Lisa: each 'examines the tensions between notions of essential personal identity and contextually re-defined subjectivity' (Burns 1994, 344). Essential to the creation of Orlando's composite identity are the various portraits of 'Orlando', which purport to represent a single, real person, living over a period of several centuries. Woolf, like Pater, superimposes these disparate images and identities upon one another, linking them (through the medium of a supposedly factual text) into a harmonious aesthetic unit.

By 'sweeping together ten thousand experiences' (1998, 80) the Mona Lisa, like *The Renaissance*, encompasses a vast historical and cultural span, is equally susceptive to Christian and the Pagan influences, and unifies these many influences into a single work of art. *Orlando* takes this possibility a step further: the Mona Lisa is presented by Pater as, effectively, a work of fiction, based upon, but not representative of, a real person; the power of da Vinci's portrait, according to Pater, originates in da Vinci's artistic genius, not in its resemblance to any real person. *Orlando* however, does purport, however humorously, to present the real life of a real person, who is naturally able to concentrate his past experience into a single, intensely realised, paterian moment: 'his whole past, which seemed to him of extreme length and variety, rushed into the falling second, swelled it a dozen times its natural size, coloured it a thousand tints, and filled it with all the odds and ends in the universe' (Woolf 1928, 68). Though composed of many selves, Orlando also possesses a 'true self […] compact of all the selves we have it in us to be; commanded and locked up by the Captain

self, the Key self, which amalgamates and controls them all' (Woolf 1928, 214), and in this respect instantiates Pater's idea of 'The Renaissance', not as a finite period in art history, but as a recurring manifestation of a distinctive 'human spirit' (1998, xxxii), which is cited as unifying the (otherwise rather miscellaneous) subject matter of *The Renaissance*.

Starting during the English Renaissance and proceeding, like *The Renaissance*, through a series of significant periods in the history of art and literature, *Orlando* presents a narrative literalisation of Pater's idea that a common 'human spirit' (xxxii) animates and unifies disparate phases in history (xxxi-xxxii): 'a spirit of general elevation and enlightenment in which all alike communicate. The unity of this spirit gives unity to all the various products of the Renaissance' (xxxiii). For Pater, 'the various forms of intellectual activity which together make up the culture of an age' (xxxii) rarely influence artists who exist, predominantly, in 'intellectual isolation' (xxxii-xxxiii); the best art was produced during 'eras of more favourable conditions, in which the thoughts of men draw nearer together than is their wont, and the many interests of the intellectual world combine in one complete type of general culture' (xxxiii). The advantage of such eras is that they produce 'personalities, many-sided, centralised, complete' (xxiii), which are capable of expressing 'the culture of [their] age' (xxxii), and Orlando is just such a being: universal, but susceptible to the particularities of cultural circumstance: 'thus, if Orlando followed the leading of the climate, of the poets, of the age itself, […] we can scarcely bring ourselves to blame him' (Woolf 1928, 20), and Schlack notes how Woolf constructs 'a portrait of Orlando that has significance on the personal, national, and cultural levels. Orlando embodies nothing less than an English family, England herself, and England's literature' (1979, 78). In the final pages of the novel, drawing upon and unifying her many selves, Orlando, also, 'might stand as the embodiment of the old fancy, the symbol of the modern idea' (Pater 1998, 80).

As Meisel notes, 'the paterian figure of the house' (1980, 173) plays an important symbolical role in many of Woolf's works (173-4); as in *Marius the Epicurean*, in *Orlando* the ancestral home functions as a living record of a familial and cultural history: 'the gallery stretched far away to a point where the light almost failed. It was as a tunnel bored deep into the past. As her eyes peered down it, she could see people laughing and talking; the great men she had known; Dryden, Swift, and Pope' (Woolf 1928, 219-220). Immediately preceding the climax of the novel, Orlando contemplates the house again, and is presented with a paterian vision of the past becoming manifest in the present:

> All was lit as for the coming of a dead Queen. Gazing below her, Orlando saw dark plumes tossing in the courtyard, and torches flickering and shadows kneeling. A Queen once more stepped from her chariot.
>
> "The house is at your service, Ma'am," she cried, curtseying deeply.
> "Nothing has been changed. The dead Lord, my father, shall lead you in."
>
> As she spoke, the first stroke of midnight sounded. The cold breeze of the present brushed her face (227)

Woolf's last novel, *Between the Acts* was, until the last moment, to be called *Pointz Hall*, and in this text the stately home, though in this case inhabited by (relatively) recent additions to a community, again serves as a repository of cultural memory. The landscape, too, is symbolical of a shared history; from a viewpoint where 'perhaps forty' English counties are visible, Orlando contemplates a landscape which contains the relics of several historic periods (Woolf 1928, 14). In both texts the landscape is primarily marked by warfare, retaining, in *Between the Acts* 'the scars made by the Britons; by the Romans […] and by the plough, when they ploughed the hill to grow wheat in the Napoleonic wars' (1941, 3-4). Unlike *Orlando*, which celebrates various landscapes (British and foreign), the English landscape becomes oppressive in *Between the Acts*: 'senseless, hideous, stupefying' (61).

Woolf also presents another survey of cultural history in this text, through Miss LaTrobe's pageant, but in contrast to the joyful aesthetic and historic effusion of *Orlando,* LaTrobe's pageant is an oppressive, violent and disturbing affair:

> "We remain seated"--"We are the audience." Words this afternoon ceased to lie flat in the sentence. They rose, became menacing and shook their fists at you. This afternoon he

> wasn't Giles Oliver come to see the villagers act their annual pageant; manacled to a rock he was, and forced passively to behold indescribable horror (Woolf 1941, 55).

Here, and elsewhere in the novel, *Between the Acts* seems to present an aesthetic crisis, in which art, and the exercise of aesthetic appreciation, is not shown, as Woolf and Pater claimed it did, to have any particularly enlightening or useful effect. The most receptive and imaginative character in the novel, Mrs Swithin (who has been identified with Woolf by various critics (Rosenfeld 2000, 179)) has virtually no practical significance (Ellis 2007, 136), and is regarded as 'extinct' by another character (Woolf 1941, 156). Mrs Manresa, a staunch philistine, is no less capable than any other character of appreciating sensation: 'why waste sensation, she seemed to ask, why waste a single drop that can be pressed out of this ripe, this melting, this adorable world? Then she drank. And the air round her became threaded with sensation' (51).

In *The Pargiters*, the prototypical text from which *The Years* and *Three Guineas* grew, Woolf again addressed the relation between gender and education, as she had in *A Room of One's Own*. In *The Pargiters*, Woolf reports an anecdote about Pater's disproportionately aggressive response to a minor social incident (Woolf 1978c, 126), in which he declared that 'it was an insinuation of the Devil that caused this woman to drop her glove' (129), and clearly identifies Pater with 'the male world of English public schools and universities' (Ardis 2001, 115), which she would identify in *Three Guineas* as an institution which cultivates fascist attitudes. This recognition of Pater's misogyny marks the beginning of a shift in Woolf's attitude, and may acknowledge the danger inherent in Pater's androcentric cultural elitism. Woolf recognised the overtly masculine aesthetic of fascist art as early as 1929 in *A Room of One's Own* (1992, 134) (and, as we have seen, she seems elsewhere to have tried to redress the gender bias in Pater's thinking), but it was only in *The Pargiters*, in the 1930s, that she openly acknowledged Pater's misogyny in her writings (although this anecdote did not find its way into either *Three Guineas* or *The Years*, a point which will be discussed in my 'Conclusion').

Like *Orlando*, *Between the Acts* is another of Woolf's texts that has caused great disagreement among critics, with the ambiguity of its satirical content providing an interpretive openness that critics have responded to in starkly different ways. The figure in the novel who has attracted the most attention is Miss LaTrobe: an artist-Outsider whom

some have read as heroically non-conformist (Eisenberg 1981; Sears 1983), and by others as oppressively dictatorial (Johnston 1987), or something in between (Rosenfeld 2000; Cuddy-Keane 1990). Although there is much that conforms to Woolf's ideal of 'the Outsider', as described in *Three Guineas*, there is far too much violence and tyranny in LaTrobe's character to be ignored; the desire to coerce and dominate, which Woolf identified in *Three Guineas* as two of the most damaging male attributes (Woolf 1992, 411), are central features of LaTrobe's character, who preys on peoples' vanity to manipulate them (Woolf 1941, 59), and is nicknamed 'Bossy' by the other characters (58). LaTrobe is a violently contrarian outsider, lacking the subtlety of Woolf's ideal feminist; she is strident and overbearing, belonging to a line of unsympathetic female characters who display masculine traits, and feature in several of Woolf's novels (such as Miss Kilman in *Mrs Dalloway* (1924), and Rose in *The Years* (1937)). In the ideal society that Woolf imagines in *Three Guineas*, 'the repulsive task of coercion and dominion would be relegated to an inferior and secret society, much as the flogging and execution of criminals is now carried out by masked beings in profound obscurity' (Woolf 1992, 411). Among those of Woolf's ideals that LaTrobe embodies, there is her desire, whilst engaging in 'coercion and dominion', to conceal herself in 'profound obscurity', by hiding, and refusing to acknowledge her role as artist (Woolf 1941, 188).

LaTrobe's association with masculine militancy is also made clear throughout the novel, in which she is compared to a 'commander' and an 'admiral' (57). Just as Bartholomew dominates his dog, shouting at him 'as if he were commanding a regiment' and securing his dominion with a 'noose' of string (11), LaTrobe frets whenever she feels that her audience are 'slipping the noose' (110, 161). Like Bartholomew, when LaTrobe feels that her audience are escaping from her, she hurls abuse at them: '"Blast 'em!" she cursed' (71), 'Curse! Blast! Damn 'em!' (85) '"Curse 'em!" […] Grating her fingers in the bark, she damned the audience' (161). The word 'Blast', which LaTrobe uses twice, is explicitly linked in the text with warfare. Woolf was writing the novel during the air-raids (1984, 312/3), and prior to LaTrobe's exclamation, Giles, like Woolf (313), imagines the threat of attack and invasion: 'at any moment guns would rake that land into furrows; planes splinter Bolney Minster into smithereens and *blast* the Folly' (Woolf 1941, 49, my italics). Aside from LaTrobe's ejaculations, this is the only other occurrence of the word 'blast' in the text.

As well as linking LaTrobe to the destruction of warfare, her choice of expletives and, particularly, her exclamation 'Curse! Blast! Damn 'em!' (85), might suggest an affinity with

an earlier pre-war literary movement. Famous for their manifestoes in *Blast*, in which they 'CURSE' (Lewis 1914, 12), 'BLAST' (13-18) and 'DAMN' (19) all that they disapprove of in contemporary English and French culture, the Vorticists were a group of artists who promoted intense, virile expression in art, and set themselves up in opposition to what they saw as Victorian flaccidity and femininity (18). The editor of *Blast* and the writer of these manifestoes was Wyndham Lewis. In 1937, a few months before she began *Between the Acts*, Woolf was reading Lewis' autobiography, *Blasting and Bombardiering*, in which *Blast* is mentioned several times, and in which some of the pages from Lewis' manifestoes are reproduced (1967, 40-45). This autobiography obviously made a strong impression on Woolf, as she mentions it in two separate diary entries, at the beginning and at the end of November (1984, 117, 119). On both occasions she describes her 'exacerbation', and her impression of Lewis's 'meanness': 'hot mean reading. Exacerbates. Yet diminishes vitality' (117). Part of the reason for this response (apart from the obvious differences in ideology), may have been his attack on 'post-war' writers for being 'in a sense […] a recrudescence of "the Nineties"' (Lewis 1967, 223), identifying 'Ronald Firbank [as] the very *genius loci* of the 'post-war', and the reincarnation of all the Nineties - Oscar Wilde, Pater, Beardsley, Dawson all rolled into one, and served up with *sauce créole*' (224).

This criticism of her contemporaries may have stung Woolf, and potentially reminded her of an attack that Lewis directed at her in 1934, in very similar terms: Hermione Lee has observed how, of Woolf's critics, 'Lewis, an enemy of Bloomsbury, struck the most aggressive note in *Men without Art* (1934), where he accused Virginia Woolf of inheriting the worst of the paterian "reaction against Victorian Manners", and of perpetuating the "suffocating atmosphere" of "a very dim Venus-berg indeed"' (1997, 1). Woolf spent several days brooding over *Men without Art* in October 1934 (1982b, 250-4). The thought of it troubled her again in November (260), and in March and April the following year (287, 308). A year after reading *Blasting and Bombardiering*, in November 1938, Woolf reflected on how Lewis's attacks on her literary reputation had contributed to its decline over the previous decade (1984, 188).

Although Lewis states in *Blasting and Bombardiering* that *Blast* was aimed at 'the Paterists and Wildeites' of the Nineties (1967, 38), Pater himself was claimed in *Blast* as an 'ancestor' of Vorticism, by Lewis and others who endorsed his argument that 'all arts approach the conditions of music' (1914, 154), (or, rather, 'all art constantly aspires towards the condition

of music' (Pater 1998, 86)). For the Vorticists, like Pater, music presented the purest expression of emotion and among the movement was the openly fascist Ezra Pound, who was responsible for creating Vorticist literary manifestoes in which, 'as in Pater, we seem to see again the figure of music as the paradigm of all art' (Bucknell 2001, 71). Bucknell also notes how, in Pound, 'the perception of the luminous detail sounds very much like Pater's belief in the importance of the critic's personal response to the work' (56), and Pound's definition of an 'Image', the basis of all Imagist and Vorticist poetry, as 'that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time' (Pound, 1913, 200), strongly recalls Pater's argument that 'it is part of the ideality of the highest sort of dramatic poetry, that it presents us with a kind of profoundly significant and animated instants, a mere gesture, a look, a smile, perhaps — some brief and wholly concrete moment — into which, however, all the motives, all the interests and effects of a long history, have condensed themselves' (1998, 96). Similarly, like Pater, the Imagists' perspective on literature encompassed all periods; their 'endeavor was to write in accordance with the best tradition, as they found it in the best writers of all time' (Flint 1913, 199). As such, Woolf may have recognised that Vorticism presented a competing interpretation of paterian aestheticism which was, if not more faithful, perhaps more powerful than her own.

The role of music in *Between the Acts* is particularly important, being one of the main forms of coercion that LaTrobe employs in her pageant. This may signify a return, on Woolf's part, to the conception of music that Woolf used in *The Voyage Out*, as LaTrobe harnesses the emotive power of music to manipulate and disempower her audience:

> Over there behind the tree Miss LaTrobe gnashed her teeth. […] Every moment the audience slipped the noose; […] "Music, music," she signalled.
>
> And the gramophone began […] Miss LaTrobe watched them sink down peacefully into the nursery rhyme. She watched them fold their hands and compose their faces. (Woolf 1941, 109/10)

Later, as the pageant draws towards 'The Present', LaTrobe's imposition becomes increasingly oppressive; the audience, like Giles, feel that 'they were all caught and caged; prisoners; watching a spectacle. Nothing happened. The tick of the machine was maddening' (158). 'The machine', which is a gramophone, is the mechanism by which LaTrobe delivers her music to

the audience. Whilst music is again presented as an incredibly powerful medium, the industrial, mechanistic aesthetic of the gramophone strongly recalls the industrial aesthetics of *Blast*, and in 'The Present' music is turned into a weapon with which to assault, or perhaps 'blast', the audience:

> The tune changed; snapped; broke; jagged. […] the rhythm kicked, reared, snapped short. […] What a cackle, a cacophony! Nothing ended. So abrupt. And corrupt. Such an outrage; such an insult. And not plain. Very up to date, all the same. What is her game? To disrupt? Jog and trot? Jerk and smirk? […] O the irreverence of the generation which is only momentarily--thanks be--"the young." The young, who can't make, but only break; shiver into splinters the old vision; smash to atoms what was whole. (164)

Following this, the audience are presented with mirrors which reflect them back at themselves, in a manner which is 'distorting and upsetting and utterly unfair' (165), causing an 'uproar' (166), into which the actors re-emerge, 'declaim[ing] some phrase or fragment of their parts' (166). After this, as the mirror bearers squat, 'malicious; observant; expectant; expository' (167), LaTrobe lectures her audience through a megaphone (168/9). The first part of this consists of LaTrobe insulting and condemning her audience in the manner of Lewis' 'Manifesto-I' (the 'BLAST' manifesto) (Lewis 1914, 11-21); in the second part she dictates the audience's positive qualities to them, in the manner of 'Manifesto-II' (the 'BLESS' manifesto) (22-28). The comparative lengths of these condemnations and blessings (the latter in each case is significantly shorter), their delivery 'in words of one syllable' (Woolf 1941, 168), and in broken and repetitive syntax, achieve a similar rhetoric effect and seem to share a similar motivation; to break and reform their audiences. This fragmented, violent and confrontational climax to the pageant, combining 'jagged', mechanistic music, fragmented speeches, unflattering confrontation, and megaphonic didacticism, might easily be read as a vorticist set-piece, designed to 'shiver into splinters the old vision' and, in Pound's ubiquitous phrase, 'make it new'. The power of this climax, which comes from LaTrobe's violent confrontation of her audience, hinges upon a distinctively paterian device.

As Haller observes, the pageant in *Between the Acts* is a pageant in both senses of the word; as well as being a historical drama it is also, in the older sense of the word, a procession. Haller notes how the final procession in *Between the Acts* closely resembles a procession in *Marius the Epicurean*: a 'pageant' (Pater 1885a, 106) in honour of the goddess Isis, in which

worshippers carry mirrors (Haller 1983, 116). Unlike Pater's pageant, which is a joyful religious ceremony, LaTrobe harnesses this traditional art form as a weapon with which to assault her audience. Also, as well as containing this mock-pagan procession, the pageant's climax presents fragments of speeches from a variety of different ages. This device, which recalls climactic moments in *Orlando* and *The Renaissance*, also encompasses several periods, but unlike these works which present a single, harmonious, fusion of influences, *Between the Acts* presents 'scraps, orts and fragments' (Woolf 1941, 169): a cacophony of voices and a disordering of periods in an 'uproar which […] had passed quite beyond control' (165-6). The Mona Lisa and Orlando provide a coherent centre in which the disparate experiences that they contain are focused and unified, but LaTrobe's final speech merely throws her audience into greater confusion, splitting them up into 'scraps, orts and fragments' (170). This is followed by music, which does partially unite the audience, but has a sinister military undertone:

> The distracted united […] Then down beneath a force was born in opposition; then another. On different levels they diverged. On different levels ourselves went forward; […] all enlisted. The whole population of the mind's immeasurable profundity came flocking; […] from chaos and cacophony measure; but not the melody of surface sound alone controlled it; but also the warring battle-plumed warriors straining asunder […] they crashed; solved; united. And some relaxed their fingers; and others uncrossed their legs.
>
> Was that voice ourselves? Scraps, orts and fragments, are we, also, that? The voice died away. (169-170)

The industrial, mechanistic aesthetic of LaTrobe's vision of 'The Present' reaches its fullest, musical expression accidentally, when twelve aeroplanes (presumably fighter planes) fly overhead in formation:

> Mr. Streatfield paused. He listened. Did he hear some distant music?
>
> He continued: […] "each of us who has enjoyed this pageant has still an opp . . ." The word was cut in two. A zoom severed it. Twelve aeroplanes [flew] overhead. *That* was the music. The audience gaped; the audience gazed. Then zoom became drone. (174, Woolf's italics)

Although the pageant does exhibit some of the properties of literature and drama that Woolf celebrated elsewhere (Woolf 1979a), LaTrobe offers no positive or constructive suggestion through her art, but rather a confrontational and disorienting shattering of illusions that incorporates paterian elements, but seems to owe more to the Vorticist aesthetic ideal than to Woolf's.

Conclusion

Woolf's relation to Pater seemed to change significantly in the 1930s, and especially in *The Pargiters*, which Woolf was writing at the same time as her biography of her close friend, Roger Fry. Meisel cites three references to Pater in *Roger Fry* (1980, 40), but there are actually four. Two of these references are quotations, taken from one of Fry's essays and one of his letters; the letter reports, with distaste, on a joke at Pater's expense (Woolf 1940, 73/4), and in his essay Fry discusses the critic's 'work of appreciation and interpretation', which is undertaken with the aim of achieving a 'more profound understanding of great imaginative creations' (106). Fry tell us that 'this has to be done over and over again for each generation. Pater did it to some extent for the last' (106), and Woolf quoted this passage approvingly, as a demonstration that Fry had 'a definite idea of the critic's function' (106). In the other two references Woolf compares Fry's skill as a critic with Pater's, and finds Pater to be the better writer (106, 227). Indeed, Pater seems to be the main critic with whom Fry is compared throughout.

The difference in the tone between Woolf's allusions to Pater in *Roger Fry* and in *The Pargiters* is surprising, and suggests an ambivalence in Woolf's regard for him; in *The Pargiters* she lays heavy emphasis on Pater's misogyny: an explicit acknowledgement of his complicity in a patriarchal (and, in Woolf's eyes, fascist) institution. Woolf's decision, then, to remove any explicit reference to Pater from *The Years* and *Three Guineas*, and to refer to him positively in *Roger Fry*, might be read as an attempt to preserve, or salvage, the 'Bloomsbury' interpretation of Pater's aesthetics against others, such as the Vorticists'. In this case, Woolf's exploration of the more troubling aspects of Pater's thinking in *Between the Acts* may represent a final loss of confidence in him.

At the end of June 1939, during a period of depression, Woolf was reading Pascal: 'come home & try to concentrate on Pascal-I can't; still, it's the only way of tuning up, & I get calm if not understanding. These pinpoints of theology need a grasp beyond me' (1984, 222). In contrast to Pascal's view, she then describes her own, markedly paterian, view: 'I sometimes feel it’s been an illusion - gone so fast, lived so quickly; & nothing to show for it, save these little books. But that makes me dig my feet in, & squeeze the moment' (222/3). On the

thirteenth of July, in an attempt to put persistent thoughts of death out of her mind, Woolf again occupied herself with literature: 'so I read Pascal & Pater & wrote letters [...] but couldn't sleep sound' (226). This brief reference to Pater, during a period of extreme emotional stress, mirrors an earlier point in her life, when she reached to his writings for consolation. In 'Old Bloomsbury' Woolf described how, during the period in which her half-brother was abusing her, she had a 'passion' for *Marius the Epicurean*, which she would read before sleeping (Schulkind 2002, 44). That she 'couldn't sleep sound' in 1939 is ominous, suggesting, perhaps, that her relation to Pater had changed since her youth, and that he could no longer provide the consolation that he once did: that although he was writer whose ideas she was deeply committed to, she could not, ultimately, reconcile herself with his misogyny.

It may be that Woolf's relation to Pater was not that of 'absent father', as suggested by Meisel but, as she described it, one of 'friendship', that moved through various phases, of emotional dependence, disagreement, reconciliation, and eventual estrangement. Just as the classic Oedipal narrative has largely fallen out of favour with psychologists, so too might Meisel's narrative be questioned: although at times Woolf seems to challenge Pater's ideas, her relation to him is far more complex than Meisel suggests. Pater certainly was not an influence that Woolf attempted to hide, but one that played an active and important role throughout her life, through periods both of sympathy and ambivalence.

19,768 words

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